

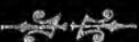


MONTEZUMA

... AND ...

OTHER POEMS.

C. T. BATEMAN.





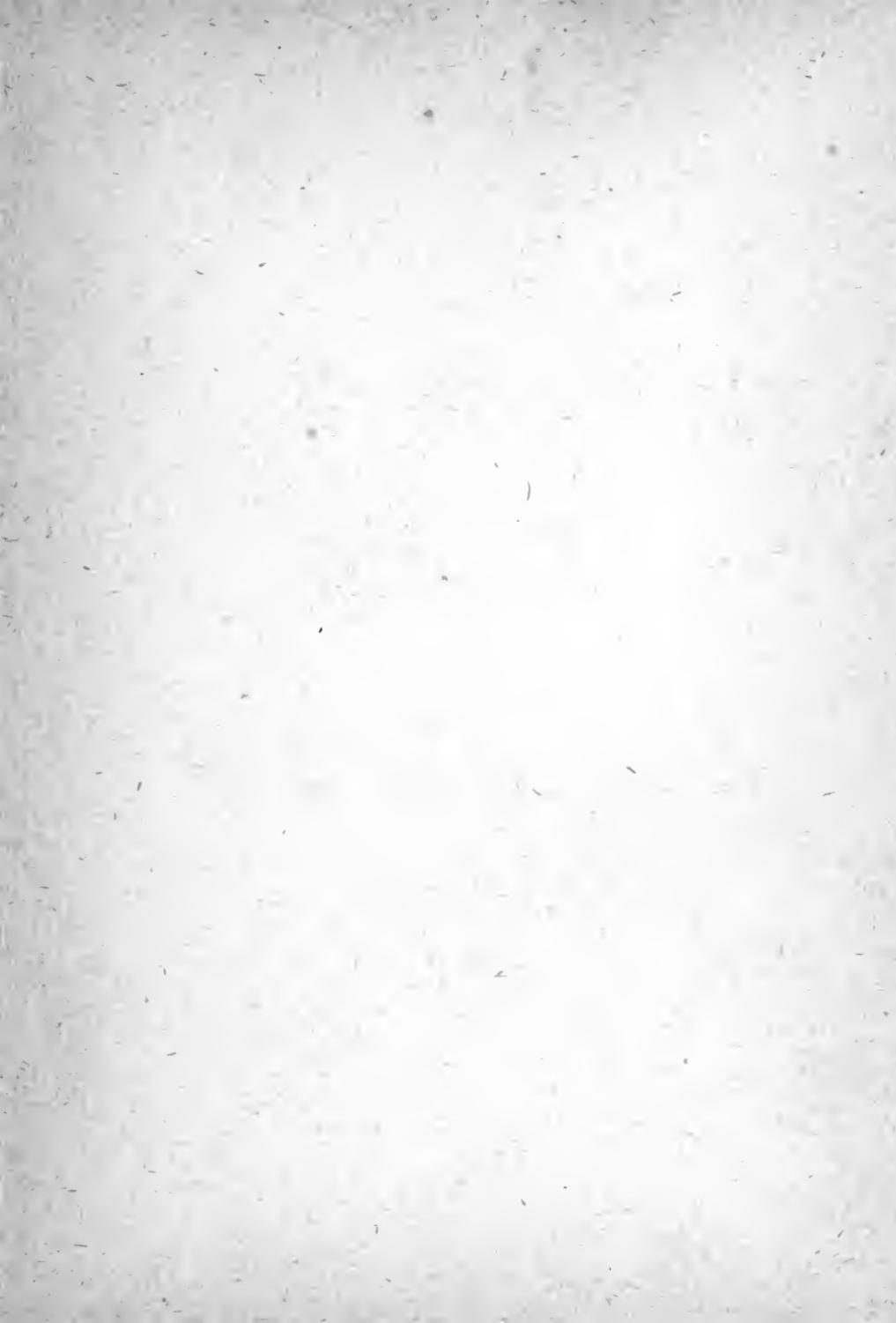
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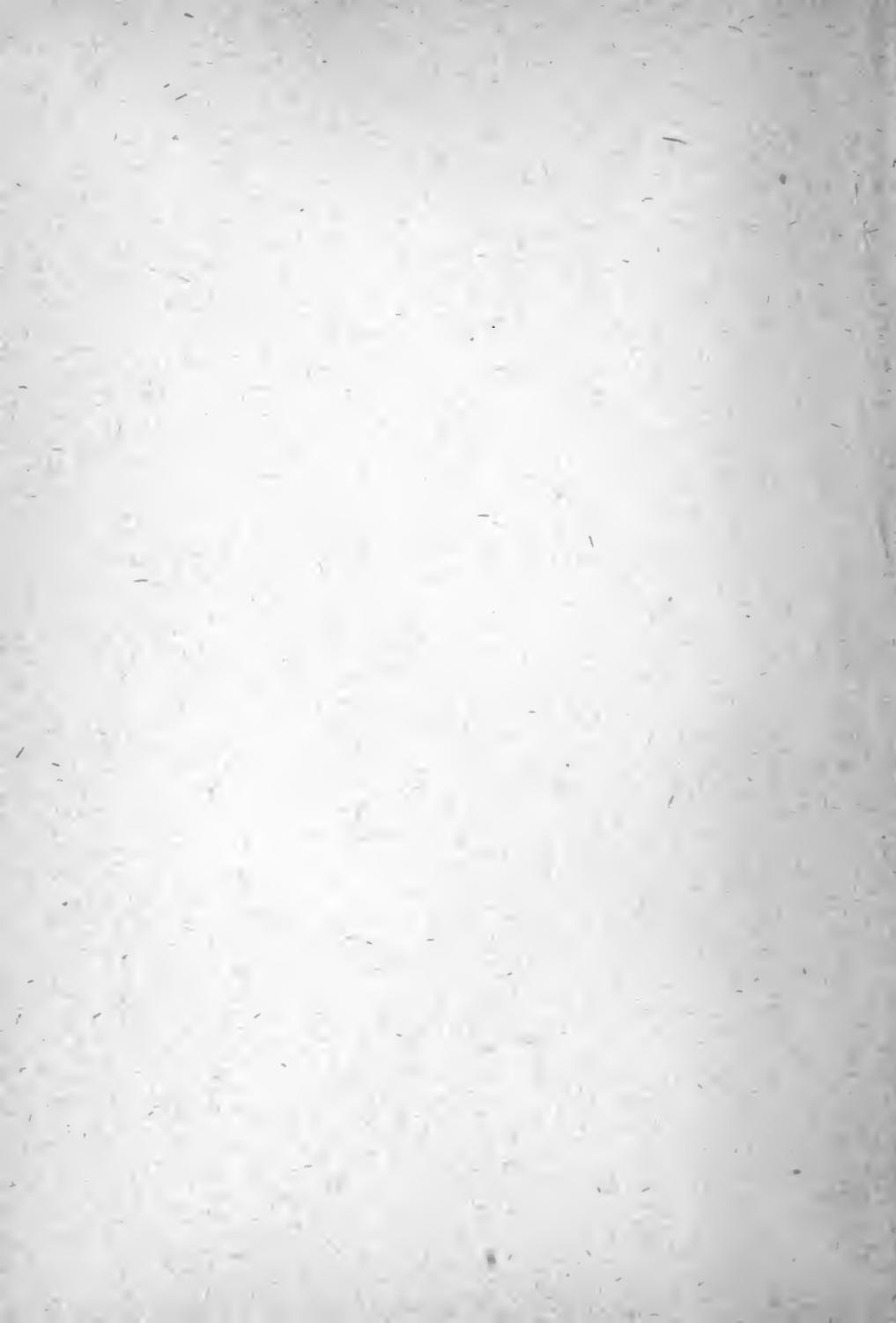
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“MONTEZUMA”

AND

OTHER POEMS

BY
C. T. BATEMAN.
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1897.

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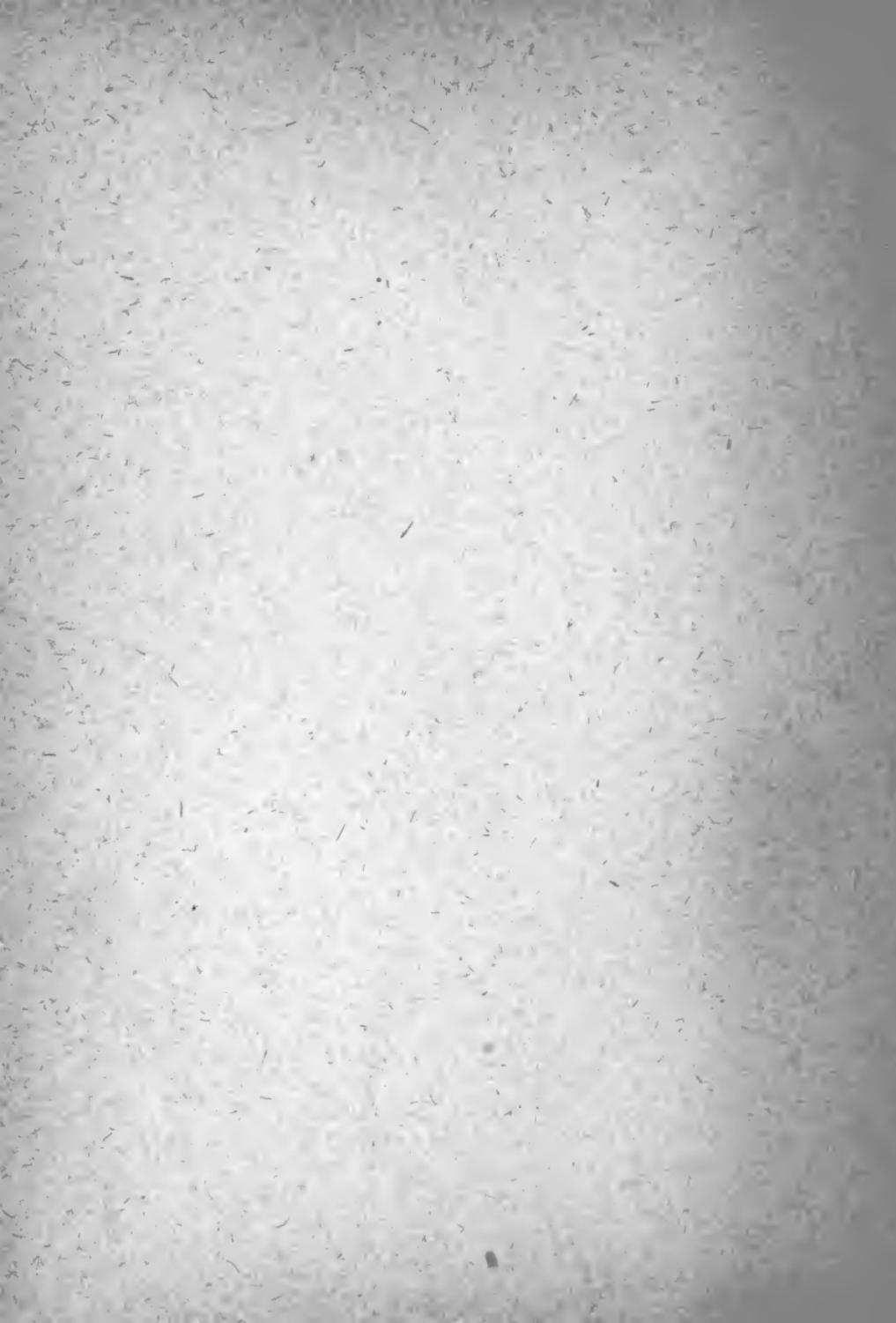
BY

C. T. BATEMAN.



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MONTEZUMA.

PART I.

T'was night within the Astec's sunny land.
Far o'er the crystal waves that circle round
And ever lave her well built island home,
The stuccoed walls of Tenochtitlan gleamed
In moonbeams pale and shallow loving light.
On many a lofty tow'r and holy shrine
All brightly burned the sacred fire and shot
Athwart the scene its red and baleful glare.
The busy crowds had left the spacious streets;
The Tlatelolco with its merchant throngs
Was still; deserted by its devotees
In solemn silence high o'er-toping all,
The war god's mighty teocallis stood.
The thousand airy skiffs that skimmed the tide,
So light they scarcely touched the yielding flood,
With streamers gaily decked and flashing wide
With ev'ry gorgeous dye the sunshine paints,
Now gently rocking lay in quiet coves.
The day had been an Astec festal day.
When first the sunlight's dawning rays illumined
The snowy Popocatapetl's brow
Proclaiming to the darksome vale below
The near approach of day, began the rites
That ushered in the day of sacrifice.

Tes-cat-li-po-ca, god of air, of life,
The soul and great creator of the world,
Had waited long his customed feast of blood.
For one short year the beauteous captive named
For sacrifice in regal splendor lived.
In Tenochtilan's honors high he stood
To Montezuma only second deemed.
The royal pages in his service bowed ;
Sweet clouds of incense round him ever curled ;
The flower's brightest bloom his garlands tinged ;
The fairest maidens found in all the land
Companions for the short lived god were giv'n.
When nobles spread the banquet table rich
The place of honor was his festal boon,
And when he deigned to show his face abroad
Or breathed melodious strains on Toltec flute,
The multitude in humble posture bent
Adored the human likeness of their god.
The sacrificial morn again had dawned.
The end of all his splendors brief had come.
Stripped of his gaudy robes, he bade adieu
To all the partners of his revelries.
Far o'er the shining wave where heav'n-ward mounts
The pyramidal teocallis walls,
In royal barges borne, the Aztec king,
The lords and nobles of his vassal train,
The fated victim of the hungry god,
Close followed by the city's vast concourse
Wide sweeping o'er the lake with festal fleets,
Had landed on Tezcoco's hither shore

And winding high around the temple's sides
Had gained Tezcaltipoca's fatal shrine.
The doomed had cast his blooming chaplets down
And sadly gazed on earth, his parting gaze.
The priests with matted locks and garments red
Had shed the blood of sacrifice that day,
Had held the bleeding, throbbing heart on high
To catch the rising sun's first glowing beams ;
The altar still was red with human gore ;
The itzli blade still showed the crimson stain,
And though the robes of night had darkened all
And sleep had hushed the city's busy hum,
Yet, many a heart with shiv'ring fear confessed
The horrors of the sacrificial stone.
Though he who died the victims sacred dath
And shed his life-blood on religion's shrine
Would rest in mansions of the setting sun
And bask in everlasting joy and bliss
With all the good and brave of ev'ry clime,
Most few were those that dared to pluck the crown.
How many longed and prayed for milder creeds,
For some religion that would bless mankind,
Wipe out the stains of superstition dark
And fill the longings of th' undying soul,
Were never known to Tenochtitlan's lord.
Within the lovely Iz ta pal a-pan
White shining on Tezcucu's farther shore
Where princely palaces in splendor rose,
Where Montezuma's wondrous gardens spread
In wide luxuriance far and filled the air

With perfume sweet, the Astec lord was found.
The rites of human sacrifice performed
The royal barges hither turned their prows
And Montezuma with his honored train
His council held in Iztapalpan.
Then Montezuma reigned in pompous pride
O'er mountains great, o'er climes of wide extent,
O'er all the regions vast that grandly stretched
From wide Atlantic's ever swelling main
To vaster deeps, the blue Pacific claims.
Within his palace Montezuma sat.
Around him stood the pillars of his throne,
The favored nobles of his rich domain,
His brother Cuit-la-hu-a, brave and true,
Ca-cama lord of fair Tezcuco's vale,
Tla-co-pan's allied king, in rank the third,
And other vassals, each who ruled his tribe
And boasted of his hundred thousand spears.
The sacred fire upon a silver shrine
Cast o'er the throng its blazing brilliancy.
With incense sweet, the burning censers filled
The gaudy room, while through the curtained halls
Came music's soft entrancing melody.
The music ceased, then Montezuma spake.
"My cherished friends we have performed this day
A pious work. Tezcatlipoca smiles
Once more on Tenochtitlan's island home;
Our knees in worship bent before his shrine,
The honors we have shown his sacred name,
Will clear of dark portents our doubtful sky;

Disheartening omens shall distract no more
And fill our souls with dark forbodings sad;
The rising sun that beamed so gloriously
And threw delightsome rays of golden light
Upon our teocallis towers gazed
All cloudless, on the victim's heart held high,
A happy sign for us that all is well.
O'er lovely Anahuac's extended climes
Inviting all its tribes to cast away
Their fears and sorrows and corroding cares
To-morrow's sun shall throw its radiance far.
To-morrow's dawning light shall fall athwart
A nation basking in in the fav'ring smiles
Of him who rules with mighty hand the world.
To-morrow let our barges gaily float
And bear us to Tezeuco's hither shore,
Bear us where Xaltocan's bright waters flow
And lave the margins fair of blooming isles
With ever murmur'ring sounds of limpid waves.
There spreads in wide extent a royal park
With wild wood's verdant bow'rs and arbors cool,
With blushing flowers and fragrance breathing trees
Where game abundant haunts its shining streams,
Hovers beneath its copses tangled growth,
Or flutters mid the overhanging trees.
Mid rural scenes the hunter's bow we'll bend,
We'll tread the thickets dense where sleeps the fawn,
We'll rouse the jaguar from his secret lair,
Or chase the puma to his rocky den.
To joy and mirth and game, four days we'll give,

Then cherished Tenochtitlan's weal shall be
Our future care. A nation's joy or grief
The monarch's joy or grief should also be;
As all the living body suffers pain
When but the smallest member feels a pang
So with the nation's body politic.
When supplications of the poor and weak
Unheeded pass, when fierce oppression builds
His gorgeous palaces with toil unpaid,
And peculation proudly gay exults
In ill-got wealth, when Crime unblushing
Walks scathless in the light, and Innocence
Flies weeping from the land, then ruin dread
And dire destruction falls on high and low,
Crushes alike the poor and harmless slave,
The haughty noble rich in vassal throngs
And broad demesnes, the emporer himself
Who stands pre-eminent, the nation's head.
Thus counselors and friends aid me to rule
Rememb'ring that the people's greatest good
Should ever be our greatest happiness.
The labor of the day is finished now,
To-morrow's plans are sketched, and now to rest.
May gentle slumber like a downy robe
Enfold your hearts in sweet untroubled sleep."

PART II.

O'er Xaltocan's fair waters smooth and calm
The setting sun's last radiance gleamed afar,
Shedding a mellow lustre o'er the vale,
Painting sweet scenes of beauty to each eye,
And breathing into ev'ry form of life
Boundless delight and joyful ecstacy.
The buzz of wings fell gently on the ear
As flocks of birds went sailing o'er the lake
Seeking the forest wilds, for night's repose.
The mocking bird poured forth its gushing song
Upon the balmy air; the vulture perched
Upon some lofty giant of the wood
Whose summit dead, threw out its naked limbs
And leafless boughs in solemn majesty
High over all the woodland growth around,
Looked down upon the beauteous world below,
And watched with silent gaze the noisy throngs
Of water fowl that haunt the reedy streams.
Like graceful birds upon the water's gleam,
The Astec's light pirogues, went glancing swift
O'er Xaltocan's unruffled deeps, or shot
Like feathry shafts, along its glowing brim.
From hamlets fair, the happy children came
And on the shining shore, with mirthful glee,
With sportive games, and thoughtless song and dance

Inhaled the odors of the fragrant air.
Young men and maidens sought for garden bow'rs
And wove in cool retreat, the flowry wreath
Or gave the hour to love and happiness.
One pair pre-eminent for beauty walked
Upon the sandy beach of Xaltocan ;
One for her graceful mien and beauteous form,
The other for his stature grand and proud
His noble face and darkly flashing eyes.
The fair Copalpa's fame had spread abroad
And many a flattered beauty envied much
The bright and blooming maid of Xaltocan.
Her father was a famous Toltec seer
Whose wild secluded home embow'rd in trees
Hard by the royal park, now brightly threw
Its white reflection o'er the glassy flood.
Copalpa with sincere devotion loved
Her comrade whom she called her warrior brave,
Her lover true, her dear Tezcalican.
They wandered near the sandy shore and gazed
Delighted on the sun illumined waves ;
Remarked the light canoes swift gliding on
As if to scape their own bright silver trails ;
Traced out an eagle's course, that circled high
Above the wat'ry gleam ; with eager eyes
Beheld the gorgeous glories of the sky
All glowing with the sunset's golden rays,
Then, turning from the beaten strand away
Sat down in shady bow'r where incense came
From flow'r parterres in odorous breezes by,

And talked of love, and sketched their future plans
When hymeneal rites in union sweet
Should bind in sacred bonds their kindred hearts.
Thus swiftly passed the precious moments by,
Yet, ere the purple tints of dying day
Had fled before the dusky skies that lead
The stately march of Night, the sombre queen
Who rules the world when sunlight westward flies,
They saw with deep surprise, as if to seek
Their chosen bow'r, a royal group advance.
Gay was the hunter throng; with nodding plumes
Their helmets waved; their cloaks were bright and rich
With skillful work of plumage so enwrought
They vied in beauty with the brilliant birds
That haunt the Astec's ever blooming clime:
Bright was the yellow dazzling gold that blazed
Profusely on their ornamented robes;
Untold the richness of the sparkling gems
That circled lordly necks or kingly brows.
Their shining shields, with strange devices wrought
Revealed the noble's rank and high estate.
Wearied with toils and labors of the chase
Upon a jewelled litter born along
The emperor, great Montezuma came.
Copalpa and her lover bowing down
With reverence before his majesty
Craved blessings on their honored master's head.
Then spake Cacama brave and youthful lord
Of fair Tezcoco: "Rise! fair maiden, rise!
Bend not to earth; a happy fortune shines

Athwart thy flow'ry pathway's future course.
Thy glorious beauty's fame, hath spread afar
And Tenochtitlan's stately maids, though fair
As crimson roses breathing incense sweet,
Or rainbow tinted humming birds, beheld
Amid the glossy leaved banana's bloom,
For such a peerless form as thine have longed,
And envied thee thy beauty's matchless cast.
Behold our honored Montezuma's face!
His ear hath often heard thy praises ring
Enkindling admiration in his heart;
And now he comes to bless thee with his love,
And from your father's cottage gently bear
You where Chapoltepec exalted stands
With tow'rs crowned and lofty battlements,
With noble groves of ancient cypress trees,
With gardens rich in myriad fruits and flow'rs,
Where splendid palaces look proudly down
Upon luxuriant vales and gleaming lakes,
And there in that delightful mountain home
Install you queen of love's elysian realm."

"No, no, I cannot go!" Copalpa cried,
"Should Montezuma make me lawful queen,
And love me more than all the fairy forms
Who throng, in grandeur proud, his harems rich.
My heart is not my own, my love is fixed.
'Tis changeless as yon adamantine cliffs
That gird this ever verdant valley round.
To one of lowly birth, of name unknown,
Yet for his noble soul and talents rare

Well worthy all the transient honors, wealth,
 Or fame, or titles high, can mortals give ;
 To one who loves me as he loves his life,
 Without whose love, my life would be a blank,
 A dark and gloomy blank without a ray
 Of joyful light to cheer its sombre path,
 I gave my word and pledged undying faith.”
 “Ah, foolish girl,” Cacama answ’ring said,
 “Wouldst thou refuse this rare, this priceless boon,
 A boon the noblest damsels found would grasp
 With eager joy and bless the silver star
 In heav’n that ruleſ her earthly destiny ? ”
 Copalpa wept and begged her freedom’s rights,
 Obscurity, her father’s peaceful home,
 The presence of her loved Tezcalican.
 T’was all in vain ; at Montezuma’s word
 A most unwilling captive she was lead
 By stranger hands from home and friends away.
 Tezcalican in dumb amazement stood
 And almost thought t’was but a baseless dream,
 Some vision wild, by troubled fancy wov’n.
 His stupor fled and darkly flashed his eyes
 With anger’s rising spell. With hopes and fears
 And anxious dread, he sought the Astec king
 And audience craved, with Tenochtitlan’s lord.
 Great Montezuma heard his suppliant prayer,
 Heard the sad pleading made by love bereaveſ
 But from his haughty presence spurned the youth,
 Threat’ning, if e’er he dared petition more,
 The horrors of the sacrificial stone.

Like leaden weights, upon his heartstrings hung
Deep sorrow came, and dark resentment burned
Within the deep recesses of his soul.

Along the shores of limpid Xaltocan
He walked. With soft and soothing melody
The wavelets rippled on the sandy beach;
The full round moon, with mild and gentle beam
Rose calmly o'er the lofty eastern hills;
The twinkling stars, from out the darksome depths
Came one by one and powdered all the sky,
But naught of pleasing sounds or fairy scenes
Could sooth the lover's anguish stricken soul.
He stopped at length and wildly gazed around.
He dropped upon his bended knees, one hand
Upon his heart, the right upraised to heav'n,
Then called upon the star that ruled his fate;
"O, glorious beam of light! sweet star of life!
Thou fadeless flame, that leads my earthly course
Who from thy inaccessible abode
Nightly looks down upon the sunless earth
And sees thy servant as he slowly floats
In joy or grief adown life's ebbing wave
O, hear my prayers, and grant me aid divine.
Before thy shining throne adoringly
I bow and make my changeless vows to save
From Montezuma's grasp, my dear betrothed
Or failing in the perilous attempt
Avenge our wrongs upon his guilty head."

PART III.

Six suns had traced their blazing courses high
Along the Astec's bright and cloudless dome
Since great Tezcatlipoca's festal day.
From Xaltocan returned the royal train
Was safe in Tenochtitlan's glit'ring walls.
Within his palace Montezuma held
His daily court. The outer halls were thronged
With noble chieftains clad in garments rich,
Resplendent decked with bright and precious gems
And feath'ry plumes in golden helmets clasped,
Waiting to bow before the greatest prince
The western continent had ever seen.
From cities far and near, from distant tribes
Whose names had scarcely reached the Aztec's ear,
From mountain climes, and tropic regions dressed
In never failing verdure, they had come.
Embassadors from distant Cozumel,
Bright ocean isle, from Guatemala's realms,
Tabasco near th' Atlantic's curling waves
Embow'red in palm trees never failing green,
From Cempoalla midst the fertile plains
Where dwell the Totonacs but late subdued
By Montezuma's arms, Xalapa's tow'rs
And lofty fanes mid oaken groves upreared
High overlooking rich enameled plains
In torrid beauty stretching far below,

From famed Cholula's city sacred held
By all the tribes of Anahuac's fair clime
Where mystic Quetzalcoatl, god of peace,
Had dwelt in ancient time and taught mankind
Religion's holy rites, from western tribes
Who ever hear the vast Pacific's waves
Roll fiercely on the trembling shore, were there
To greet their emperor and tidings bring
From ev'ry province in his broad domain.
First came a suppliant before the throne ;
With age his form was bent ; his step was weak ;
Around his chin the curling gray-beard crept
And o'er his shoulders fell the few white locks
That passing years had failed to bear away.
His eyes, undimmed by age, revealed the fires
And glowing fervor of a mighty soul,
Or flashed their arrow piercing glances deep
As if they saw man's secret thoughts and read
The dark arcana of the human heart.
He was the Toltec seer of Xaltocan,
But Montezuma knew him not nor dreamed
Of wrongs himself had heaped upon his head,
Nor read the anguished lines upon his brow.
He bade the suppliant speak who thus began :
"O king ! Thou mighty lord of all the tribes
Who dwell in Anahuac's extended climes,
I pray thee bear with me, though I may speak
With unbecoming boldness in thy ear
And hear me patiently, though painful truths
This aged tongue of mine may utter here.

It is a time for bitter thoughts to stir
The inmost depths of ev'ry beating heart,
A time for joyous laughing eyes to weep,
A time to meditate upon the past,
And wisdom learn from dear experience,
To gaze upon the future's opening veil,
And read its strange forebodings shadowed forth
In light reflected back, from ages past.

I now am old; have counted well my years,
Have seen of life its dark mysterious ways,
Have striven hard to learn the laws of God
And from his throne, celestial waters quaffed,
Have sought to feed on wisdom's heav'nly food,
And though with human imperfections clothed,
And naught but feeble mortal pow'rs boast
To ward off fell destruction from our land
I fain would warnings give and counsels bring.
Twice have I seen the rolling years bring round
The rites that mark the cycle's dreaded close;
Twice have I seen the dark unlucky day
When winter's snow among the mountain dells
Lay thick and deep and dimly shone the sun
With slanting rays, when anxious fear came down
And men in pieces broke their household gods
Distrustful of their waning pow'r to save,
When holy fires faint and fainter grew,
Until each sacred ember slowly died
Upon its dreary, cold, unworshipped shrine,
When the torn world, disordered, waiting stood
Prepared to meet the genii of fate

Whose coming wraps the world in chaos dread.
Twice have I seen the last dark day depart
And midst the deep'ning shades of evening seen
The priestly throng ascend yon mountain's brow,
And as the Pleiades the zenith gained
Beheld upon the victim's wounded breast
The new fire blaze aloft and heard the shouts
Of boundless joy from gazing thousands rise
From hill and roof and tow'r and temple's dome.
Twice have I seen, from sacred beacons lit,
The red'ning glare of countless torches tinge
The midnight air, o'er all Tezeuco's vale
And seen the festive days of jubilee
That ushered in the new born cycle's course.
Like some grand picture painted bright and clear
Thy famous uncle's reign before me lies.
His great achievements I remember well,
The gods regaled with human hecatombs,
The terraced temples built, the works of art
That beautify the Aztec's chosen seat,
And with prophetic eye regarded well
The bearing of events. I too have seen,
Thy gradsire's stately palaces arise;
Have heard his legion's warlike tramp and seen
His gorgeous banners shine in triumph proud
And wisdom from his mighty actions learned.
The past I see in clear and faultless light;
I read the future in the shadows dim
Coming events shed on the light of now.
We stand upon a dread and fearful brink;

Abysses dark are yawning neath our feet ;
But one false step we topple down in ruin ;
No earthly power then from from utter woe
Can save this beauteous land, the gods will not.
'Tis not too late perchance to turn the course
Events are taking now and safety gain.
Hast thou, O king ! not read aright the signs
That fill thy people's hearts with fear and dread ?
Dost thou remember how Tezcuco swelled
When all the sky was calm, and causeless rolled
It's wildly rushing billows o'er its shores
O'erwhelming happy homes, in furious wrath ?
The quenchless fire that wrapped in curling flames
The loftiest tow'r upon the war god's fane ?
Three blazing comets swung in heaven high
Eclipsing stars, with pale and gloomy light
Threat'ning our land, with more than mortal swords ?
Strange voices heard in evenings calmest sky ?
Ominous sounds from beneath the solid earth,
And how, far eastward rose that wondrous light
Like some vast pyramid of glowing fire
Whose sparkling apex reached the zenith high
Thick powdered with bright, scintillating stars
And changed the dark plumed Night to lurid Day ?
E'en now, methinks, I hear the multitude
Whisper of mystic Quetzalcoatl's day ;
His promise to return and claim his own ;
The speedy end of Montezuma's reign,
When the new empire of the god of peace
Shall make the land a glorious paradise.

Let not thy servant anger thee, O king !
But let me show thee Danger's fearful face.
Thy own right hand hath brought destruction near ;
Thou hast forgotten all humility
And chilled the love thy people gave thee once ;
Extravagance hath burdened all the land
With grieved tithes ; unwilling maidens torn
From dear paternal homes and bonds of love
Within thy harem walls, have brides become,
Unlike the happy Toltec race of old
Whose altars never ran with human blood
Nor smoked with aught, save incense wreathing clouds,
Thou hast polluted all the land with blood
Poured out before thy cruel senseless gods.
These signs in heaven above and earth beneath
Foreshadow sword and deadly pestilence ;
They are the omens dire of changes great ;
Then pale and grisly Fear shall walk abroad
And ev'ry heart shall fail, before his gaze ;
The weak shall safety seek in mountain dens ;
The strong shall fall and none shall give him aid
When dark and dread the days of judgment come.
They are the voices of the murdered dead,
The spirits of the hapless victims slain
Upon the horrid stone of sacrifice
That fill the air with sounds mysterious.
They cry for vengeance on this guilty land,
For never shall they find a haven of rest
Until their airy manes are appeased
By some undaunted hero who shall sweep

This dark religion boldly from the earth.
May thine the blessed hand become to wash
And cleanse these sad and guilty stains away ;
Restore to earth the pure and gentle rites
That Quetzalcoatl taught in days of yore,
The worship of that great eternal god
The sole Creator and omnicient one.
One God alone there is, th' Omnipotent
Who needs no ministers to do his work,
Who reigns among the glowing stars of night,
Whose arm upholds the sun and guides the moon,
Whose hand from mingled chaos wrought the earth ;
The valleys heard the thunder of his voice
And rock built mountains pierced the vaulted sky
And hot volcanoes smoked ; the sea and land
Felt his enlivening breath and swarmed with life
And in the radiance of his gracious eye
Th' unbounded universe his praises sang.
O king ! I pray thee turn thy heart to him
Alone and trust no more thy cruel gods
Whose pow'r cannot avail in times of woe.
Without reform thy empire soon shall fall
And death and ruin riot o'er the land.
The burdens of thy people lighter made
Would soon recall their love, dissensions heal
And firmer seat thee on the Aztec throne.
Let justice ever be thy shining shield,
Let meekness form thy royal diadem,
And temp'rance fold thy limbs in during mail,
Then, armed with arrows tipped with piercing truth,

Unharmed thou may'st withstand each threatening foe
And triumph over all the ills of earth,
And when thy radiant sun of life shall set,
And thou shalt join with choral symphonies
The shining throngs that circle earth and sky
Attending on the glorious orb of day,
Or, midst the blissful gardens of the west
In such beatitude as mortal tongue
Can never hope to tell, shalt gain repose,
Then, shalt thou leave behind a deathless name
Enduring as yon bold Chapoltepec
Whose rocks beheld the day's primeval dawn,
A name revered and loved, by grateful lands
Made happy by thy long auspicious reign.
One favor yet, for me and mine, I fain
Would ask O king ! I am the Toltec seer
Of Xaltocan. From home delights and love,
From unambitious joys and humble state
Torn by thy pow'r away, my daughter weeps
A pining captive in thy harem halls.
O ! give her liberty again I pray ;
Restore her to my old and anguished heart
And with each morning light and evening shade
For thee my prayers shall rise before the throne
Of him who rules supreme, the universe."

The old man ceased and bowed his hoary head.
Then dark with wrath grew Montezuma's brow
And rising from his golden throne, bade thrust
The Toltec seer beyond the city's bounds
And order gave forbidding his return.

Next from the throng a noble lord came forth;
 Over his richly tinted cloak he spread
 The nequen, hiding all armorial signs,
 And by a royal page led in, advanced
 Within the audience hall. He bowed himself
 Before great Montezuma's throne august.
 His right hand touched the earth then grazed his brow
 In humble salutation ere he spoke.
 " My noble lord what news hast thou for me ? "
 The king began ; " perchance thou bringest news
 Of great import. If right I mark thee now
 Thou comest from afar and tidings bear
 From fair Tabasco's warm and fertile shore."
 " I do, O worthy king ! " the lord replied.
 " Perhaps thine ear hath heard wild rumors come
 Borne on the floating breath of wond'ring throngs,
 Distinctless murmurs of the multitude,
 Weaving, it seemed, from airy shadows, forms,
 Fantastic shapes, described as vast pirogues
 Swift gliding o'er the boundless billow's foam
 Wide spreading bright and snowy wings to catch
 Each freshly springing breeze of ocean birth,
 And filled with children of the orient sun
 Whose fair complexion seemed, to link their race
 With mystic Quetzalcoatl's sacred blood.
 These rumors now, however strange, are true.
 Fair Cozumel, upon her island shores
 Hath heard the white man's tread, in terror gazed
 Upon the winged canoes, and saw the flames
 Leap red and bright from thunder belching throats

With which they spoke, or watched them plow the
waves

With more than giant strength and toss aside
In sporting play, the white and foamy surf.
All weak and powerless their gods became
Before the white man's face : from sacred shrines
And lofty temple heights, with ruthless hands
They hurled the Indian gods in ruin down
And fed the flames with many a worshiped form.
They raised a cross, the symbol of their creed,
And made it god alone in Cozumel.
From thence they sought Tabasco's flow'ry plains.
Tabascan warriors met, 'th invading band
Upon the shallow flood, their river rolls ;
They struggled with their fierce and hardy foes
Upon the river's soft and slipp'ry banks ;
Behind their palisades, they sternly fought
But all in vain, the white men gained the day.
Our forces fled, but fled to fight again.
On Ceutla's plain, with forty thousand men
Prepared to meet our dreadful foes we stood
Nor waited long. Ere noon, the third day's sun
Had gained, we saw them winding through the plain,
Beheld the gleaming of their metal spears
Amidst the fields of growing maize and heard
Upon the graveled roads, the heavy roll
Of strange machines of war. Then face to face
As mortal foeman meet in deadly strife
On Ceutla's bloody plain we met and fought.
Like hail upon the mountain's rocky slope

When somber storm-clouds roll along the sky
Our arrows fell upon their serried ranks.
Unharmed they moved amidst the beating show'r
And armed with lightning's flames and thunder's shock
They piled the trampled plain with Indian dead.
The arrow's hiss, the crash of whizzing balls,
The dying groans and shouts of struggling men
Filled all the air; but hark, a tumult dire,
A rushing sound, like tempests wild with rage
Is heard upon our flank. With battle cries
They came, the white man's chosen cavaliers
High mounted on their fierce and mighty beasts
Unlike all ever seen by Aztec eyes;
Down! down! upon our terror stricken ranks
They ride and right and left, with flaming swords
Cut through the frightened throngs. Dissevered limbs
And gasty heads, and mangled corses roll
Upon the gory field. The riders rush
Trampling and crushing through the swaying mass.
At length our thinned and bleeding forces break
And fly in wild dismay. Dark Terror spreads
Above the panic stricken fugitives
His quaking, trembling wings and fills the air
With horrid sounds and forms of frightful mein.
The day is lost and every bosom sinks
In grief, and blank despair gloats o'er the scene.
Alas! how many weeping widows mourn
O'er bloody Ceutla's graves, or parents sigh
Over the fate of unreturning sons.
Tabasco's lords in mild submission bowed

And forced allegiance gave to him who rules
The white man's home beyond the ocean's tide.
Fallen from high estates and earthward flung
Tabasco's gods were trampled under feet
And, as at Cozumel, the cross was raised
Mid shouts of joy and far resounding chants
Upon the sacred throne, where once reposed
In awful state, the ebon god of air.
From fair Tabasco northward o'er the sea
The strangers passed to seek thy famous land.
Many a weary league o'er burning plains,
O'er rivers swollen wide with mountain floods,
Through forests dark and over rocky steeps,
I've passed to meet thee in thy island home
And warning give, that thou may'st guard thyself
And people well, from all intruding foes."

"I thank thee noble friend!" the king replied,
"For all thy pains I will reward thee well.
I'll ponder on thy words, though strange they seem.
Within my palace stay till rest and food
Recruit thy wasted strength. Here worthy page
Attend the wishes of this noble lord."

PART IV.

“ Two weeks in prison passed,” Copalpa sighed,
“ Two weeks a captive here and yet no news
From home. No father’s voice to soothe my woe.
No lover’s smile to cheer my heavy heart.
Though here luxurious feasts are spread,
And grand magnificence on every side
Surround, and liv’ried servants ever stand
To do what’er I wish, and beauteous throngs
Of matrons fair and damsels young and gay
Fill all these palace halls with mirthful joy,
And, though I wait to be a royal bride,
And share with other queens the monarch’s smile,
Still from my burning eyes the tears will fall ;
Though laughter comes betimes it cannot hide
The deep drawn sigh or drive away the gloom
That hovers like a cloud upon my brow.
Why do I sit and gaze so wistfully
Upon yon shining lake or sloping lawn
Or watch each stranger’s face with eager looks
As if I thought my father’s dear old face
Would come to greet once more my longing eyes
Or I might catch again a loving glance
From him whom I have loved since infancy ? ”
Thus plained Copalpa midst the garden bowers
Of fair Chapoltepec. The gloom of night
Came softly mingling with the deepening shades

Of verdant trees and ever blooming shrubs
And still she sat and watched the gleaming stars
Come silently from out the darksome depths
Of cloudless skies or sang with plaintive voice
Some favorite melody of girlhood's days.
A gentle voice, a whisper soft, disturbed
The maiden's quietude. She turned and heard
Her name. It was Tezcalican, who spoke,
"Hist, hist! my sweet Copalpa, not a word.
In ev'ry hidden walk and shad'wy nook
Around on ev'ry side grim dangers lurk.
These cool retreats and guarded palace walls
I've watched for days to gain a glimpse of you
And try by some bold, daring deed to save
My fair Copalpa from a harem's life."
"God bless thee dearest one," Copalpa breathed.
"O let me fly with thee! We'll freedom gain
And seek a refuge wild mid mountain crags
Where love may fold us in his happy arms,
Or die in striving for this glorious boon."
"We'll try," the answer; then with cautious steps,
They passed through clust'ring bowers of scented vines,
Beneath the darkly waving foliage
Of lofty cypress trees, among the founts
That sparkle midst the sylvan solitudes,
Climbed o'er surrounding walls and gained at length
The water's placid gleam. His light canoe
Lay waiting on the silent sandy shore.
One moment more and like the graceful swan
It skims along the calm unruffled wave.

“ O haste ! ” a whispering spirit seemed to say
From out the fragrant breezes passing by.
“ O haste ! thy precious freight is deathless love
More precious far than all the yellow gold
Or sparkling gems, great Montezuma owns ;
Not all the countless wealth from Tasco drawn
Or wrought from Zacotallan’s rocky hills
Could bring such joy as thy affection gives.
Tezcaltipoca grant thee heavenly aid.”
Such words of cheer Tezcalican received
As coming from the Genii that ruled
His destiny. It nerved to double strength
His arm and onward shot the tiny boat.
The stars of heaven threw their feeble rays
Upon the darksome lake, but in their hearts
The star of hope, a glorious light diffused.
Sometimes the rush of lonely prows was heard
And dancing lights from many a distant skiff
Came glim’ring faintly o’er the polished wave.
In the dim distance with its holy fires
Bright blazing on its thousand lofty fanes
The eye beheld in dusky outlines stand
The mighty city of the Aztec’s pride.
On, on, they swiftly urge the light canoe
As each one to the wonted paddle bends.
Far, far, behind with faint and fainter glow
The holy fires reflect their baleful light.
Like fireflies dancing o’er some meadow damp
When genial summer lights their mimic lamps
Far rearward float the thousand lessning brands

That rowers kindle on each barge's prow.
Before, the kindly darkness and the wave,
Behind, the closing waters and the light
That tells where busy multitudes collect.
Before, 'tis freedom, love and life itself,
Behind, 'tis slavery, grief and horrid death.
On, on, Tezcuco's lake is nearly crossed,
From o'er the dark outline of distant hills
The rising moon it's soft effulgence pours
Upon the night enveloped plain below,
And thickens danger round the fugitives.
Tezcalican beholds with trembling fear
The lighting of the waters calm expanse
And strives with more than wonted energy
The shelt'ring shore to gain ere swift pursuit
Should mock the hope, the veiling darkness raised.
Alas, Tezcalican, that flood of light
Hath brought misfortune on thy hapless head,
Hath brought the itzli blade upon thy soul.
Vain, vain, your hasty flight, ye cooing doves ;
From watchful eyre high, the cruel hawk
Hath downward stooped ; the angry, whizzing rush
Of his remorseless wings is heard afar ;
No flight however swift can stay their fate.
In hot pursuit the Aztec lord had sent
His minions forth. Wide sweeping o'er the lake
Seeking the fugitives, with rapid oars
The royal barges plowed the darkling floods
Nor found but rayless depths and sleeping shores,
Perchance, some slow, belated fisherman,

His finny prey secured, now homeward bound,
Or floating gently on the lazy tide
Festooned with wreaths, and richly trimmed with flags
Some pleasure boat, with merry hearted crew,
Till Luna's silv'ry torch with shim'ring ray
Revealed the lover's course. Not long the chase,
Both strength and hope had failed their youthful hearts
And blank despair had chilled the love of life.
They saw their armed pursuers near and heard
Their threat'ning voices o'er Tezcuco ring.
Few were the hurried words of love they spake,
One last embrace. The dark, deep waters closed
Unpityingly above the self doomed pair.
To seek repose beneath the crystal tide,
To lose in death all sorrow, woe and pain,
To sleep the soul away to spirit worlds
And join perchance the bright and joyous throngs
That dwell upon the sun's resplendent orb,
To their benighted minds seemed better far
Than bear the crushing hand of cruel fate.
Thus seeking death they sank beneath the lake
But found not there his cold and pallid form.
Ere life had fled, the divers drew them forth
And bore them back to Montezuma's court.
Condemned to die upon the war-god's shrine
Tezcalican in guarded prison lay
Mourning his sad and gloomy destiny.
" Alas, alas! " cried he, " Is there no good
No light, no joy, in all this world for me ?
Why was I born ? Did being only come

To bring me anguish, woe, and hateful death ?
Is there a God who built the universe,
Who rules supreme, all things that are, have been
Or yet shall be ? Perhaps he may exist ;
Our wise men tell us of his mighty power ;
His goodness and perfection infinite ;
Then why should he endow me thus with life,
Life fitted for the joys this earth contains,
Give to me reason, sense and longing hopes
Ending in bitter painful mockery ?
My life, a sad and hopeless failure seems.
In childhood's helpless hour misfortune came
And hand in hand we walked, companions then,
Companions yet. Joy often comes to earth.
I've seen his garlands wreathed on many brows,
Have seen him oft with happy comrades dance,
Yet, when I turned on him my wistful gaze
'Twas only chilling frowns he deigned for me.
To some are riches, honor, health, and power
While others poor, despised, and weak toil on
Through life and sleep in unremembered graves.
Ah ! who can pierce the veil of mystery
And tell from whence and wherefore evil comes ?
Where is the land that gave the monster birth ?
Who is the sire of such a progeny ?
Is earth the only region by him cursed
Or doth his cruel spirit wide pervade
Creation's vast extent ? Is life alone
Saddened by his relentless, tireless hand
Or doth his fell dominion pass beyond

And anguish bring on disembodied souls?
 If death shall land us in a better world
 Perhaps the evils of this changeful life
 With all its burdened woes of hapless grief,
 Of crushed and broken hopes, of painful toil,
 Of dark oprobrium and shameful crime,
 Of sad existence fraught with pain and death,
 Will all be righted by a master hand
 And our rebellious thoughts complain no more."

PART V.

Beneath the haughty Spaniard's daring foot,
 In grandeur, beauty and magnificence
 The land of flowers lay. Wide o'er the realms
 Of ample Anahuac's dominion spread
 The news of white men wafted o'er the floods
 From far Tlapallan's bright mysterious shore
 And landed on the Aztec's sacred soil.
 Oft where the lofty Ceiba throws its shade
 The wond'ring people gather round to talk
 Of the bright tules, children of the sun,
 Their fair complexions, robes of texture strange,
 Their fearful arms, the stately winged pirogues
 That brought them safely o'er the ocean deeps,
 And, most of all, their swift and mighty steeds

That bore their fearless riders o'er the plain,
Or dashed resistless through opposing foes.
As bats from dark and sunless caves come forth
When dusky twilight dims the summer day,
Traditions hoary with the mist of years,
Half buried in the gloom of ancient time
Came forth and mingling with the gath'ring throngs
Gave form and hue to every strange report
And heightened all the mysteries, the past
Or present brought before the Indian mind.
Untroubled in his fairy mountain home
With strong and rocky ramparts girt around
Deeming himself secure from human foes
Great Montezuma held supreme control.
Perhaps the fame of Quetzalcoatl's reign,
The old tradition of his sure return
To claim his kingdom o'er the western world,
Those strange reports that from the seashore came
Climbing and spreading o'er the high plateaus
Until they reached fair Tonocbitlan's isle
Of white men riding on the eastern waves
In floating houses built with snowy wings,
Their doings where they deigned the solid land,
The signs in heaven above and earth beneath
Filling all people's hearts with awful dread,
At times gave some disquiet to his mind,
But fawning courtiers banished ev'ry thought
Of boding ill, and dangers darkning round,
And ever spread before his royal eyes
Fair pictures, bright with every rosy hue

Of purest happiness and future joy.

O'er great men's eyes, Fate cast a blinding vail
And kings and princes stumbled in the dark.
Some heard the mutters of the gath'ring storm
And read mysterious portents in the skies
But found no pow'r to move the hearts of kings
Or means to save from dark impending doom
And helpless ruin, their cherished, native land.

The dream of peace and calm security
Soon broke and fled from Montezuma's eyes,
And fear like ghastly ghoul from grave-yard haunt
Revealed in dreadful form before him stood.

Teulille an Aztec lord, a messenger
From eastern plains where dwell the Totonacs
Brought word that made the monarch pale with dread
And tremble on his frail and tot'ring throne.

Before his nation's chosen lord he came
And thus th' astounded emperor addressed :
" O noble sire ! Unwillingly I bring
Thee tidings boding ill, I fear, our land.

Upon the eastern shores of thy broad realm
Where first the orient sun beams kindle up
The light of day upon the Aztec soil,
Where Cempoalla's late subjected tribes
The maize and glossy leaved banana raise
And, clothe the verdant fields with indigo,
White men from lands unknown beyond the sea
Have boldly dared to set presumptuous feet
And now demand a pathway through thy land
And with thy majesty an interview

Here in fair Tenochtitlan's rock built halls.
In numbers they are weak, in knowledge strong.
In boldness and self-confidence they seem
A host of mighty pow'r ; they come, alas,
Not transient visitors, for when they reached
Our shelt'ring shores and gained the solid earth,
As if intending no return, they burned
Their floating houses and prepared to dwell
Among the simple minded Totonacs.
Their chief is Cortez whom we call Malinche ;
A man of God like form and haughty brow,
Of daring soul and firm unbending will.
Another chief is Alvarado famed
For sunny locks and handsome form and face
Wherefore we call him bright Tonatiuh.
Olmedo is their priest and counselor
Who bears the cross, the symbol of their God,
And leads the worship of these wondrous men,
Consoles the dying with his cheering words
Or checks with calm rebuke the sinful hand.
An Aztec maiden, who had been a slave
On far Campeachy's shore, Marina named,
Yet often called the beautiful Malinche
Attends the white faced chief, where'er he goes
As his companion and interpreter.
They say, ambassadors to thee, they come
From some great king beyond the briny sea.
In form and feature and in human wants
They seem but men, but whether born of earth
Or tules nurtured in the sunlight's home

High o'er the eastern deeps, I cannot tell.
They are the men who fought at Ceutla's plain
And made the fields grow red with Indian blood
And sacred shrines destroyed at Cozumel.
Not bows and clubs, like ours they deign to wield
But armed they seem to be with sulph'rous flames
And all the dread artillery of heaven.
Hast thou not seen, from out the rolling storm
That darkens all the azure atmosphere
The blazing lightnings leap with bursting crash
And shiver to its base an aged pine
On Popocatapetl's rugged steeps ?
So thunder, smoke, and crash, and overturn,
Their missiles, when they wake their sleeping fires.
Four-footed beasts have they of mighty pow'r
Unlike all ever seen within this land,
As large and strong as buffalos that throng
The northern plains. Upon their haughty backs
These white men mount and swifter than the wind
Are born along the trembling, shaking earth.
Canoes have they of form and size so strange
They seem like giant pelicans with wings
Of snowy plumage spread to catch the breeze,
And when the freshening gale comes rushing by
They mount the rolling waves and onward move
Majestic o'er the ever swelling seas.
Here noble father ! read this manuscript.
Observe its pictures well. They're true as life.
'Twill give thee knowledge of the stranger hosts
That seek admission to thy royal throne."

With trembling hands the Indian emperor
Received the manuscript. With troubled brow
He darkly gazed upon its pictured page.
Within that mystic book he seemed to read
The cruel fate of all the Aztec race,
And saw with something like prophetic eye
The shadow of his own sad destiny.
O'er the bright sunlight of his soul there came
The darkness of some terrible eclipse.
He felt his empire slipping from his grasp ;
His royal gemmed penache, the diadem
To him bequeathed from noble ancestors,
He saw to ashes crumble on his brow.
He shivered neath misfortune's heavy hand
And longed to gain a refuge in the grave.
The trusted gods, his fathers long had served,
To whom his life-long adorations giv'n
Might build some hope of favor in the hour
Of anguish, gods, for whom, a nation's tears
Had not been spared, for whom the painful toil
Of millions scarce sufficed their greedy shrines,
For whom a myriad temples reared on high
Became vast slaughter pens for human flesh,
Forsook him in the trying hour of need.
Roused from his musings sad, at length he called
Brave Cuit-la-hu-a, brother true and tried
And bold Cacama, strongest of allies
That deigned to prop the Aztec's tot'ring throne
And thus addressed his worthy counselors :
"O brothers ! dark and evil days have come

And Hope like a startled bird now spreads her wing
As if to bid our land a long farewell.

Tulille's strange speech, within thy ears still sounds,
Like the first echoes of th' advancing storm,
Or as the hollow smothered groans that come
Ere earthquake's shock o'erturns the rock ribbed hills
And buries lakes within the yawning earth.

It is a time that wraps each thinking soul
In dread bewilderment; a doleful hour
That sadness brings to ev'ry loyal heart.
Wise counsel now from you I sorely need.

I pray you speak: Perchance some way we'll find
To rid ourselves of these strange visitors.

Were they but earth born men of mortal mould,
Like men we soon should meet them face to face
And all undaunted hurl th' invader back.

But if they come as children of the sun
To claim the land in Quetzalcoatl's right
To re-establish his dominion here
As in the legendary days of old,
Resistance would but surer vengeance bring.

To hear thy friendly counsel now I wait."

Then bowing, Cuit-la-hu-a thus began:
"My king! my brother! fain would I propose
Some plan to take this burden from thy soul
I see how trouble pales thy radiant brow,
And earthward drags thy noble, gen'rous heart.
Should tules come, from glorious sun-realms down
How happy should I be to welcome give
And bow myself a humble suppliant

And crave their blessings on my mortal brow.
 O king! let not thy heart be heavy more.
 Let not traditions old nor doubtful signs
 Disturb thy peace. These strangers are but men.
 The gods are just, and children of the sun
 Have naught but love beneficent for men.
 Yon golden orb of day, what tongue can tell
 Th' uncounted blessings it bestows on man.
 It gives us light and life and joy and hope;
 It gives us beauteous skies and blooming earth.
 The grass that softly clothes yon smiling plain,
 The flow'rs that breathe sweet incense on the air,
 The silken corn, that waves its slender leaves
 In ev'ry breeze that floats our lakes among,
 The plenteous fruits, that bless our cherished land,
 The forest giants on our mountain slopes,
 The gentle show'r, the sky refreshing storm,
 The shining fish that leap in silv'ry waves,
 The glorious tinted birds that gladness bring
 To ev'ry blooming grove, and all the forms
 Of happy life that cheer our landscape fair
 Are but the rich and beauteous gifts, the sun,
 The king of day, our Father, gives to us.
 Tell me not beings ever came from thence
 Defiled with earth-born passions; beings fierce
 To drench the sun-kissed earth with human blood;
 Beings whose souls are fired with quenchless zeal
 Against the very teocalli reared
 In honor of th' eternal god of heaven.
 Their shameful deeds, wherever they have been,

Their natures common to humanity
 Give proof, conclusive proof, that they are men.
 Superior to us, perhaps they seem,
 As we to tribes who roam the northern plains
 And rudely live on spoils of war and chase,
 But still how few their numbers when compared
 With all the thousands ready at thy call
 To march where'er thy eagle standard floats.
 Then let us rise and drive them from our shores
 Or bury them beneath a wooden shov'r
 Of life devouring shafts. Perchance we'll drag
 Their chief to die the victims bloody death
 Upon yon lofty Teocallis stone
 Before Mexilti's stern and pit'less face
 Fit expiation for his sacrilege."

He ceased and then Cacama thus began :
 "Great king ! thy brother's counsel seems to me
 Too warlike in its tone to serve our need ;
 But who and what these wondrous strangers are
 I fain would know before advising war.
 If they're of Quetzalcoatl's godlike race
 'Tis madness to oppose their hither march ;
 If as ambassadors they visit us
 Sent by some noble king beyond the sea
 'Twould show a meanly weak, suspicious hand
 To thus oppose their mission to our shores ;
 Let open hearted friendship welcome give
 And if they prove unworthy of our love,
 If they betray our sacred confidence
 With right upon our side and heaven's help

Remorselessly we'll crush the stranger hosts,
As anacondas crush in death's embrace
The antlered stag, or ocelotl fierce,
And thus we'll prove, that strength but stronger grows
When fighting neath the banner of the right."

He ceased and Montezuma sought the shrine
Where fierce and black Mexilti's image stood.
With sacrifice and off'rings rich and rare
He bowed himself and aid divine implored,
But dumb the god, and dumb his crimson priests ;
Then taking counsel of his growing fears
Adopted neither Cuit-la-hu-a's plan
Of bold and open war, nor peaceful means
Urged by Tezcoco's brave and gen'rous lord.
From out the treasures of his hoarded wealth,
To show his pow'r and grand magnificence
He chose bright diadems and coronets
Dazzling the eye with emeralds and pearls
And crystals of the purple amythyst,
Bright helms and hollow shields and heavy chains
And wheel-like zodiacs of purest gold,
Plume-woven garments, rich with all the tints
That clad a thousand brilliant forest birds,
Unrivaled by the bloom of scented fields
Or green chinampas on the waters blue.
And then addressed Teulille the tried and true ;
"Here noble chieftain ! see these treasures rich ;
I trust them in thy care. Go ! choose a band
Of tamanes and bear these precious gifts
Unto the teules chief, the great Malinche.

Tell him that Montezuma is his friend.
 Give him our royal welcome to our shores ;
 Bid him receive the gifts as tokens giv'n
 To bind the chain of friendship firm and strong ;
 His daily needs from out the nation's store
 Shall be supplied and give him this command :
 'Dwell thou upon the borders of our realm
 Until thy sovereign bids thee back return
 But come not nearer to my mountain home.
 No monarch of the noble Aztec race
 E'er gave to strangers such a dangerous boon
 As leave to visit Tenochtitlan's isle.'
 Go forth my brave Teulille ; thou knowest well
 I fain would keep the great Malinche afar ;
 I leave the rest with thee, and may the gods
 From sungilt heavens smile propitiously."

PART VI.

Week after week of golden summer days
 Rolled by and Autumn's painted robes were seen
 Redning the hillside, purpling valleys bright,
 And scatt'ring fruits where Spring had planted flowers.
 'Twas one of those delicious sunny days
 When all the world was bright and beautiful.
 The Aztec emperor from out the tow'rs

That crowned the heights of fair Chapoltepec
Gazed wistfully upon the shining wave
That swept protectingly its silver floods
Round Tenochtitlan's walls and sadly mused
O'er the enchanting scene, his childhood's home,
The pride of youthful days, the grand estate
He long had ruled in happy quietude.
He trembled lest the lovely scene should fade
And darkness covers all the joys of life.
The very air seemed dark and ominous ;
Nor sun, nor moon, nor constellations bright,
Nor winds, nor rain, nor thunder's jarring sound,
Nor earthquake's shock, nor nature's deepest calm,
Could give a cheery hopeful atmosphere.
It was the great Malinche, the white man's chief,
Whose interposing shadow hid the light
That long had beamed upon the Indian heart.
Regarding neither gifts, nor friendly words
And careless of commands imperial,
Malinche had spread his banners to the breeze
And in Tlascala's rugged, mountain land
Had met the dusky warriors of the rocks
In bloody fray. Before his sturdy blows
The heron fell, its snowy plumage soiled ;
The golden eagle, emblem of the tribes
Tlascala nurtured in her rocky deeps
Drooped his resplendent wings and haughty crest
And yielded to the mighty conqueror
Submissively his dearest, proudest boon,
The ancient independence of his race.

Cholula too, religion's sacred home,
The holiest city of the western world
Where pilgrim devotees unnumbered throng
To gaze upon its lofty pyramids
And off'rings bear to Quetzalcoatl's shrine
Had fallen neath the stranger's bloody hand.
In vain four hundred towers flashed afar
The light of never dying, sacred fires ;
In vain the cherished shrines that overlooked
The mighty city, with its crowded streets ;
In vain the valor of its dauntless sons ;
The white man's sword had made it desolate.
Its smoky heaps and blackened walls appear
Where happy multitudes were wont to crowd
The broad arenas of its market squares.
Its gods in that dread hour of deep distress
Forgot their ancient promises to save.
From out Cholula's broken pyramid
Came forth no raging flood to overwhelm
Its pit'less foes or quench its wasting flames.
With silv'ry lustre, midst the fruitful fields
Far southward stretched lake Chalco's limpid waves.
The later flow'rs still lingered on its shores ;
The purple orchards cast the autumn gleam
Wide o'er its quiet deeps ; the fading leaves
Down flut'ring on the gentle breezes fell
And floated on its liquid, glassy sheen.
Here forest groves crept to the water's edge
And there the cultivated fields drew up
The freshning moisture of the friendly lake ;

Here dwellings nestled beneath the clust'ring trees,
And there the well built villages were seen
Like jewels on a rich embroidered robe.
Fairest and brightest on the Chalcan shores
Stood Ajotzinco with its walls of stone.
Towards its far distant gleaming, anxious eyes
From Tenochtitlan's lofty towers bent
And trembled with forebodings deep and strange.
There lay Malinche and all his marshalled hosts.
White men from o'er the sea, the Totonacs
From distant Cempoalla's torrid clime,
And throngs of fierce Tlascala's hated sons,
There rested from their long and toilsome march.
Before another sun should rise and set
That host would knock at Tenochtitlan's gate.
Upon Tezcuco's shore, with towers high
And from the Aztec city dimly seen
A sacred teocallis grandly rose
Upon whose summit stood Mexitli's shrine
Where human sacrifices daily bled
Before the war-god's stern and awful form.
Thither, before that bright autumnal day
Had faded, Montezuma and his lords
With royal fleet went gliding o'er the lake
Bearing the victims doomed to sacrifice,
Yet, ere they gained the templed halls of death,
To win once more Mexitli's gracious smile,
To seek the boon so vainly craved before,
Relief from dread Malinche's bloody host,
A sudden storm arose. The howling winds

Leapt madly down and caught the rolling tides
 In wild embrace and hurled the spray aloft.
 Deep darkness with its swooping pinions shed
 Disastrous shadows on the troubled waves.
 The rain in torrents fell, and lightnings blazed
 And struggled with the black unconquered night.
 A captive in the barge that victims bore
 Slipping the thongs that bound his aching hands,
 Unseen, unnoticed, in the tumult dire
 Plunged headlong midst the surges boiling high
 And safely gained at last the storm lashed shore.
 With hurried march the angry storm passed on ;
 A calm stole slowly o'er the troubled lake
 While through the broken clouds that rearward hung
 Fol'wing the footsteps of the tempest, shone
 The setting sun with soft and mellow beam
 Removing danger from the royal suite
 And gave once more the Aztec's beauteous world
 The bright and rosy tints of hope and joy.
 " "Tis well," said Montezuma as he stepped
 Upon the rock paved shore. " The storm has spent
 The fury of its wrath, and ev'ry barge
 Safe from the cruel sport of wind and wave
 Is mooring now upon the sacred beach.
 Behold how bright the glorious sunset sheds
 His parting rays upon these polished stones
 And gilded tow'rs that crown yon holy fane,
 The lofty throne, where great Mexitli sits
 And graciously receives our sacrifice.
 As yon resplendent sun-god sweeps the clouds

Of darkness from our sight, and paints the world
Anew with golden tints and cheery hues,
So may our patron god sweep from our skies
The sombre clouds of danger o'er us hung
And brighten all the Aztec world with hope.
Bring forth the victims now and let us mount
That winding way which leads where blood is shed
Atoning for the nation's grievous sins,
But what strange thing is this, my trusted guards ?
The seventh victim, where is he ? come, speak !
What have ye done with fierce Tezcalican ? ”
“ We slew him as the vilest of the seven,”
The guards reply, “ and cast him midst the floods
That round us rolled, deep yawning for our lives
If haply thus we might appease Tlaloc
The mighty god, who rules the storm cast heav'n,
Who sends us both the calm and gentle show'r
And fierce deluging rains, with thunder mixed.”
No more was said. A shadow as of grief
Passed o'er the Aztec's dark imperial brow
As slowly turning round he led the way.
With solemn steps they climbed the steep ascent
That round and round the pyramidal pile
With less'ning spirals high and higher wound
Until, the summit's broad arena gained,
They stood before Mexitli's cherished shrine
To make atonement for the nation's sins.
Then Montezuma's voice was heard in prayer :
“ O, hear us ! great Mexitli, patron god,
Preserver of our nation's pow'r and fame,

Decree of our future destiny,
O, hear the cries of thy unhappy sons,
For troubles, like a sea of boistrous waves
With tumult dire, upon us fiercely leap
Threat'ning to 'whelm us neath resistless floods.
Like the dread storm, that madly shrieks and howls
Among the mountain's dreary solitudes
Grim Fear hath rushed upon our fainting hearts,
And the deep darkness of despair rolls night.
Moonless and starless on our gloomy souls.
Let now thy mighty hand be stretched to save.
At thy command, yon beauteous city rose
From out the depths of fair Tezcuco's lake
And like a lily sat upon the waves.
Its foes have felt the vengeance of thy arm
Or fled dismayed before thy winged shafts.
O, great Mexitli! save us from the wiles
Of dread Malinche, who rests e'en now his hosts
Upon the Chalcan shore. His coming throws
An ominous eclipse, wide o'er the land
And fills our hearts with sad uncertainty.
If aught of cold neglect hath angered thee,
If we have failed in off'rings rich and rare,
Forgive us all these faults, what'er they be,
And grant us graciously thy help divine
While we renew our vows to worship thee
As once our fathers did in olden times
E'en as we did, when I, a humble priest,
Was glad to sweep the stairways of thy halls
Or decorate thy shrine with simple flowers.

Then daily, noble lives were given thee ;
 Not such poor, worthless slaves as later suns
 Have seen upon thy stone of sacrifice.
 Henceforth, if thou wilt bless the Aztec race
 Thy altars ne'er shall want for noble blood."

The emperor arose and calmly stood
 Before Mexitli's throne, while one by one
 The priests led forth the pale and tremb'ling men
 Doomed to the sacrifice. The great drum beat
 Knelling the last heart throbs of victims slain
 To mollify the angry god's deep ire.
 'Twas Montezuma's last great sacrifice.

The pow'rs above, that rule the azure sky,
 That guide the shining orbs of night and day,
 The gods of earth, and of the wat'ry deeps,
 To whom high teocalli filled the land,
 Whose idols grim, could only desolate
 The beauteous plains that lay beneath their shrines,
 Gave no response to prayer or sacrifice.

PART VII.

'Twas night, and dusky shadows darkly lay
 Upon lake Chalco's dimlit, smooth expanse.
 The Spanish camp was quiet, save the tread
 Of watchful sentinel or breathings deep
 Where slept the rider and his weary steed.

Wakeful and anxious Cortez sat and gazed
Upon the darksome water's placid face
That seemed to rest in gentle unison
With all the sleeping world that lay around,
And mused upon the herculean task,
The mighty work, that he, almost alone,
And far from aid, had dared to undertake.
A few brave men with strong and willing hands
Were his, to do his ev'ry bidding well ;
His dark allies could give but feeble aid ;
His own right arm, his quick and fertile brain,
And faith unwav'ring in his destiny,
Must be the main and all pervading pow'r.
Before him lay, almost within his grasp,
The golden prize, for which he long had toiled,
For which he risked his all, his wealth and home
His fame, and life itself. The morning sun
Would show the gleaming of its palaces,
Would touch with fire its red tetzontli walls,
Would paint upon the azure sky beyond
In bold outline, its templed towers grand,
Would burnish with his radiant beams afar
Tezeuco's lambent waves and verdant shores,
And show where lofty built Chapoltepec
High heavenward lifts its domes magnificent.
Scarce half a score of easy miles away
There stood the beauteous city, grand and strong
And mighty in its splendid opulence,
The vaunted pride of all the Aztec world,
The seat of Montezuma's dreaded pow'r.

From out its swarming streets its armed hosts
Had often poured like dark resistless floods
Until its surges broke upon the strand
Where briny oceans toss their foaming seas.
The glit'ring prize, indeed, was near at hand
But inaccessible and strong it stood
Defended by Tezcuco's friendly tides.
A hundred thousand warriors stood prepared
To seize their arms at Montezuma's call
And for their city dare the fate of war.
Not force alone could give success but craft
And cunning stratagems in friendship's guise
Must give abundant aid. The noble cause,
To add so rich a jewel to the crown
Of glorious Spain, to overthrow at once
The dark and bloody rites of pagan shrines,
Convert a nation to the Christian faith,
And plant the cross within this wondrous land,
Would sanctify the means, however harsh.
Each jarring element in all the realm,
Each foe hereditary must be roused,
Must be united and combined to aid
In crushing this barbarian emperor.
Approaching footsteps broke at last the train
Of reveries that circled through his brain.
'Twas Alvarado, whom the Indians named
Tonatiuh, but not alone he came;
Close by his side a youthful Toltec walked.
"Cortez! I've brought to thee a fugitive
Escaped from yonder city's tyrant lord.

Perchance he bringeth news of deep import,
Some tidings that may give us needed aid
In this our great and weighty enterprise."
"Most noble Alvarado ! thanks to thee !
Let fair Marina come and be our tongue."
She came and thus, through her, the Indian spake :
"A captive have I been for weary months
Bound fast within a dismal prison cell,
Condemned to linger there in anxious dread
Just poised 'twixt painful life and cruel death
Waiting the horrid doom for me prepared
Before Mexitli's dark and bloody throne.
No prisoner saved from war's devouring wrath,
No felon branded with inhuman crimes
Was I. My crimes were those of purest love
Where law and justice were upon my side.
The lord of yonder island city snatched
The bird of hope and life from this poor heart
And when its folded wings with sorrow drooped
Within that gilded cage, Chapoltepec,
And all its music ceased, my soul grew dark
And vengeance whispered fierce imaginings.
I strove to open wide the prison door
And bear my prize to some fair mountain's shade,
But vain were all my hopes. A narrow cell
Where golden sunlight never broke the gloom
Nor warmed with cheerful glow my clammy bed,
Where sights of joyous beauty pleased no more
The weary eye, where sounds of melody,
Of mirth, of love or passion, never came

To wake the silence of the lifeless stone,
Became my sole domain, my little world ;
But yesterday brought me deliverance.
Filled with deep terror at thy near approach,
For you are held as foes of dreaded pow'r,
Fearing alike to welcome you as friends
Or meet you boldly on the battle field
Lest he should fight against the godlike sons
Of Quetzalcoatl's race and thus incur
The fiercest anger of the guardian gods,
King Montezuma led me forth to die
The victim's death before the war-gods face,
If haply thus the patron deity
Appeased by such a bloody sacrifice
Would save from ev'ry foe, the Aztec world ;
I was but one ; with me six others were,
All doomed alike to sacrificial death.
Guarded and bound, they placed us on a barge
Then, launching out upon Tezcoco's tide
They strove to reach a lofty temple built
Upon the mainland shore, where dark and grim
The war-gods image feasts on human flesh.
A storm came on. A wilder, fiercer one
Was never seen. How thick the darkness fell,
How poured the rain, in dreadful torrents down,
I need not tell ; Thine eyes its fury saw,
Thine ears the mutt'ring of its thunders heard ;
To die amidst the waves, were better far
Than bleed beneath the hands of cruel priests.
I slipped the knotted bands, and headlong plunged

Within the dark and wildly rolling deeps.
Kind fortune gave her aid, and here am I,
Thy friend and servant, but a bitter foe
To Montezuma and his tyrant house.
With thy consent I'll join thy armed host.
Some aid, perhaps, my feeble hand may bring."
The night passed swiftly o'er the sleeping throngs.
High over eastern hills and mountain crags
A bright autumnal sun revealed its face
From cloudless skies and filled the world with light,
And as it looked upon the smiling plain
It saw the Spanish host upon the march,
For Montezuma's wave washed citadel.
What tongue can tell, the varied feelings, hopes
And aspirations of that moving band.
The clangor and the din of horses' hoofs
Upon the causey's hard cemented road,
The trundling of their cannon wheels that roll
A dull monotony of heavy sounds,
The strange jargon of words, where gath'ring crowds
Looked on the moving pageant with surprise
And thought the prancing steed and rider one,
A god-like being from some distant sphere,
Broke on the list'ning ear with strange effect.
They gazed with wonder on the fruitful plain
Now clothed and decked with autumn's fairest robes.
They saw the purple orchards bend with fruit,
Gardens still fresh with bloom of ling'ring flow'rs
And fields of cotton and the yellow maize.
Mid shelt'ring groves and clustering vines they caught

Glimpses of happy homes and villages.
Along their route lake Chalco stretched afar
Its silv'ry floods and on its bosom bore
A thousand light canoes and floating isles.
Some eyes in simple wonder thus beheld
The beauteous scene and longed for stranger sights;
Some gazed with saddened brows, and turned their
thoughts
Toward the distant hills of old Castile;
To some, these scenes of busy life and pow'r
But added fear to hearts already faint;
To others they could bring but visions bright
Of countless wealth and ever during fame.
Still on and on they moved, until at last
The gleaming walls of Tenochtitlan burst
Upon the sight. Wild cheer on cheer went up
Wide echoing o'er lake Chalco's quiet deeps
Until enthusiasm kindled high
In ev'ry heart, and each man felt himself
A host whose own right arm might battles win.
Alas how few, that greet with joyful shouts
The sight of that fair city's battlements
Shall e'er return from neath its hostile walls.

PART VIII.

An aged man with wearied steps drew near
The sloping brow of fair Chapoltepec
And neath a giant cypress sat him down
And gazed with wistful eyes upon the scene
That lay in view so lovely and so grand.
How bright and splendid in the mellow light
Of autumn's setting sun the city looked.
More like some vision of enchantment spread
Before the dreamer's fertile brain it seemed
Than earth's reality. How smooth and calm
The lake lay in the bosom of the vale
And seemed to bear upon its silver wave,
With all its solid teocallis tow'rs
Its stone built dykes and massive palaces
The proudest city of the western world.
Around and on the water's clear expanse
Where e'er his wand'ring eye might turn he saw
The signs of human life and human toil ;
Chinampas moving slowly o'er the deeps
Or anchored where some sheltered cove gleams out,
Light bounding barks that scarcely touched the tide,
Orchards and woods and cultivated fields
Stretching along Tuzcuo's fertile shores,
Cities and towns and temples gleaming far
And throwing dark reflections o'er the lake.
Thus gazed the Toltec then, perchance, he dreamed :

A mystic form before the old man stood
E'en such as old traditions often tell
The benefactor Quetzacoatl wore
In ancient times when men beheld his face,
A tall and noble form, a snowy beard,
A mild blue eye beneath a sunny brow ;
In garments white his graceful form was clad ;
A belt with golden clasp of strange device
Around his waist restrained his flowing robes,
While down his shoulders streamed his long white hair.
His clear toned voice with strange magnetic pow'r
Fell on the aged Toltec's list'ning ear :
"Arise, O seer ! and get thee to the hills
From whence thou comest, for a storm shall rise
And sweep this lovely scene with horrid ruin.
From the deep, mountain caves where Fairies dwell
From that dark realm where sunlight never falls
Where Fate his doleful record keeps, I came.
The raging Furies now are on the win
To vex this land and dire misfortune bring.
Death ready holds his sharpened blade and longs
With eager hope th' expected carnival
When Fate shall bid him stretch his pinions dark
And smite the land with sword and pestilence.
A change is coming o'er the nation soon.
'Tis close at hand. Its shadow even now
Darkens the throne of Aztec royalty,
But darker yet and thicker, deeper still,
Its gloom shall fall, enshrouding high and low
In one long, black, despairing night of woe.

Hast thou not heard how ocean floods have thrown
Upon these shores a host of strangers, born
Far toward the orient realms of rising day?
Hast thou not heard them called the Teules bright
The children of the sun from heaven come?
Look on yon beauteous city girt around
With clear Tezcuco's ever lambent floods.
The Tlat-e-lol-co with its busy crowds
Is seen where all these smooth paved highways meet.
That lordly pile is Montezuma's home.
Within its curtained halls and fragrant rooms
Embassadors and kings their homage give
To Tenochtitlan's lord, and messengers
From ev'ry tributary nation bring
Tithings and offerings of treasured wealth.
With portals op'ning on the market square
Behold another splendid palace stand
Where Montezuma's grandsire long ago
His court maintained in rare magnificence.
Within its stately walls and roomy aisles
The white man's face is seen ; the steady tramp
Of sentinel rings through the corridors
And horses neigh, within its open courts.
The Spaniards with their wearied tamanes
And warriors from Tlascala's rocky dells
Have safely passed the causey's narrow track,
The open gates, and through the surging crowds
That thronged in countless thousands to behold
The wondrous visitors, whose fame had spread
Through all the regions of the Aztec world,

And now are quartered in those ancient halls.
Though entertained with friendship and respect,
Fed by the bounty of the royal board,
Arrayed in costly robes and decked with gold
And ornaments of rare and precious stones
Drawn from the hoarded treasures of the realm
By order of the Indian emperor,
Yet they are vigilant and well they keep
Within those strong built walls no careless watch.
Their coming sounds the knell of Aztec pow'r.
Thy broken sceptre down to earth shall fall
O fairest city of the lake of lakes !
Weep for thy throne is rent and desolate ;
Thy race shall rule no more, but humbly serve ;
Sorrows shall darken all thy sunny sky ;
Thy warriors valiant, strong, and firm, shall fall
Beneath the strangers all devouring sword ;
The direful pestilence shall visit thee
And thou shalt mourn thy widowed, childless state ;
Thy palaces shall topple down in ruin
And all thy mighty teocalli reared
In honor of thy gods, to shapeless mounds
Shall crumble, leaving scarce a sculptured stone
To tell the tale of gods and worshippers
Destroyed and numbered with the things that were.
Fallen and prostrate neathe the Spaniard's heel
Thy race can only cry in agony
And call on Death to cure the troubled heart.
Drink ! drink ! the bitter cup prepared for thee,
For God hath seen thy dark and cruel deeds

O Tenochtitlan beauty of the lake,
Drink deep and let thy dying wail resound
A warning to the nations of the earth!
As old traditions long have prophesied
Of my return, so have I come again
But not to rule my ancient kingdom o'er
And teach thee mercy, love and purer faith
As once I taught the peaceful Toltec race
But bid thy lands, I loved so well, adieu,
Grieve o'er thy fallen state and coming doom
Then, to my mystic shore repair again."
The vision faded from the old man's eyes
And all was silent save the busy hum
That floated from the city's crowded marts.
" 'Tis well perchance," the Toltec calmly mused
" That spirit came and timely warning gave.
I'll heed those words prophetic and return,
For dangers lurk in ev'ry ambush here
And coming wars can bring no charm for me.
I cannot follow where the banner leads,
These aged limbs of mine can bear no more
The added weight of buckler, spear and helm.
Whatever changing revolutions come
Little have I, indeed, to gain or lose
Save the faint hope of seeing her again
My darling child Copalpa, last bright link
That binds my soul to earth and she, perhaps,
E'en now walks in those bright celestial fields
Where throng the happy spirits of the blest,
Or bending o'er the parapets of heaven

With garlands wreathed of never fading light
Upon her loving brow, with radiant hands
Beckons me on my slow paced journey there.
Yes, I'll return to yonder distant home
Though drear and desolate it waits for me,
Yet ere I go from hence I'll question well
That flower girl that bears so jauntily
Her basket with its load of sweet bouquets
And fragrant fruits, and learn what'er I can
Of Montezuma and his palaces.
E'en now perhaps may be the chosen time
While strangers fill his heart with awe and dread
To bring my only child deliverance."
They met and O, what rapturous joy was theirs ;
How unexpected, yet what ecstacy.
'Twas fair Copalpa's face he saw once more,
Again her sweet and loving voice he heard.
" O father, father ! heaven bless thee now
And ever more. How fortunate am I.
What gladness thrills my heart. Can it be real
Or do I dream ? so oft I've dreamed of thee.
Last night I dreamed that I should meet thee here.
I've just escaped from yonder palace walls
By means of this disguise that covers me.
Quick father let us fly. My absence marked
Pursuit may blast again my growing hopes."
" Yes, yes, dear child ! " the father said, " Come on,
This joy gives strength and vital energy.
We must not linger here. Away ! away !
For mountain dens where wild beasts love to dwell.

Away from city, plain and gleaming lake;
No safety midst the pleasant haunts of men
To us is given; that boon is only found
Where rocky steeps and overhanging crags,
Dark gorges hidden beneath the forest shades,
And rugged mountains inaccessible
Forbid the near approach of ruthless man.”
Their flight was toward the hills, that northward
stretch

Their rocky chains around the pleasant vale.
Not on the open highways ever thronged,
Nor midst the happy villages, they passed,
But through deserted fields and forests wild
They chose unseen their lonely, winding way.
The daylight fled, and dark-robed Night led forth
Orion, shining with his starry robes
To guide the wand’rers on their weary way.
“Father,” the fair Copalpa sighed at last,
“Oh, I’m so weary, let us rest awhile
Within the darkness of this bushy screen;
My heart beats faint, and I can scarcely raise
My aching limbs to stumble on the way;
Come sit thee here and while we rest I’ll tell
Of Montezuma and the strange Malinche.
Thou knowest well how white men crossed the sea
And gained the Aztec shore, then marching on
Through valleys wide and over mountain crags,
Mid hostile tribes, and cities black with ruin,
Reached fair Tezcoco’s vale and shelter found
Within the ancient halls of royalty.

But yesterday an interview, Malinche
 Obtained with Montezuma and his court.
 The king with mild benignity received
 The white man's chief and then addressed him thus :
 'I oft have heard of thee, my friend Malinche,
 And wondered what thy mission here could mean.
 Tell me of things beyond the ocean tide,
 Thy king, thy native country and its laws,
 And of thyself. What is thy titled rank,
 And why thy royal master sends thee here
 To visit me. I wish to know it all.'

Then Cortez bowing, thus addressed the king :
 'We come, great Montezuma, not as foes
 To rend thy noble empire from thy hand
 But as ambassadors we seek thy throne.
 Our Christian king sends messages of love,
 Would gladly form alliances with thee
 Enriching with commercial intercourse
 Thy mighty nation, and his royal realm.
 And more ; I see a false religion hangs
 Like Night's deep darkness o'er thy native race
 That brings but woe and pain upon thy land,
 And will, at last, by gross delusions sink
 Thy nation in perdition's deepest pit
 Where light and hope and joy can never come.
 We offer thee, the holy Christian faith
 Brought down from heav'n by the Son of God,
 Attested by his more than human pow'r,
 Given to man, to save from wrath deserved,
 Preached by the saints to all the eastern world,

The only faith that had its birth in heaven.
 Its banner is God's love to fallen man ;
 Its symbol is the holy crucifix ;
 Its mottoes, hope, and faith and charity.
 Upon its altars blood is never shed.
 The sacrifice the son of God demands
 Is true repentance of each earthly sin.
 It offers us a bright and happy home
 When we have passed the darksome river death
 Where sorrows never dim the radiant brow,
 Where joy unclouded by a single woe
 Fills all that beatific world with light,
 Where God's eternal throne forever stands
 The glory of th' unbounded universe.
 Receive us then O king, as ministers
 Sent by our gracious monarch for thy good,
 Sent to redeem thy race from Satan's chains
 And freedom give from ev'ry bloody rite.'
 He ceased, and Montezuma thus replied :
 ' My friend Malinche, all praise and love is due
 Your noble king, and it shall be my joy
 To honor him above all earthly names,
 To seek his favor and his confidence,
 And make him know me as a brother king.
 Before I saw thy face I often heard
 Thee called religion's stern, relentless foe,
 Have heard of sacred shrines to ashes burned
 And holy symbols trampled under foot
 By thy command. How good thy gods may be
 What mighty pow'rs they have I cannot tell,

But mine are great and good enough for me.
They are the gods my ancestors adored,
Who guarded us when we were weak and poor,
Who gave us here a beauteous island home,
Who gave us vict'ry over all our foes,
Who gave us riches, power, and great renown.
I served them humbly as a menial priest,
They raised me up and placed th' imperial crown
Upon my brow, and now for twenty years
Have guarded me with ever watchful care,
Wherefore I cannot worship other gods.
When human thoughts for forty years have run
Within the self same channel, hard it is
To turn their course or bend them to the will.
Our gods, too, offer us a happy home
Within the spirit world, a bright abode
Amidst the glories of the rolling sun
Where darkness, mist, and shadows never fall,
Where all the good with choral symphonies
Shall circle earth rejoicing in the light
Of endless day until prepared, at last
For brighter realms beyond the western sky,
Where we shall find a home forever blest
Where great Tezcatlipoca reigns in peace
O'er all the beauteous plains of paradise.
Wherefore Malinche press not thy doctrine now;
The hope that I should change my steadfast faith
Is all in vain, but let our friendship rest
On other grounds than that of common creed.
Behold yon pyramidal temple rise

High overtopping all the city round !
'Tis dedicated to our patron god,
The great Mexitli, whom we all adore
And on his altars heap in sacrifice
The dearest treasures we may call our own ;
For all we are, and all we have is his,
Given us by this glorious god of heaven,
Given to use awhile and then restore
That all mankind may learn true gratitude.
I grant thee, for the service of thy god,
A portion of that temple's holy square
Wherein your daily worship may arise,
A place whereon to bend the suppliant knee
And lift your pious hearts from earth to heaven.'
He ceased, and then with words of gratitude
Malinche retiring left the royal halls.
Thus day by day in grand formality
They meet to talk of Anahuac's fair clime,
Of Europe's Christian realms and Christian faith,
But dark hypocrisy lies there concealed
And each one hides his craft in friendly smiles.
Within his capital the one beholds
A dreaded foe and longs to see the time
When fierce Malinche and all his impious hosts
Shall die upon the altars of his gods
In expiation for Cholula's wrongs.
The other watches some excuse to sieze
The Indian emperor, subvert his pow'r,
And to the Spanish crown a jewel add
Eclipsing all the brilliants of Peru.

Now father let us haste upon our way ;
 I feel refreshed and long to gain the wilds
 Of yonder mountain crags and canons dark
 Where we, at last, secure from royal foes
 Within some friendly cavern may repose."

PART IX.

Over the crystal depths of Xaltocan
 A light canoe swept hurriedly along,
 Urged onward by a strong impetuous arm
 Until it struck upon the sandy beach
 Beneath the shadow of the Toltec's home.
 Tezcalican stepped forth upon the shore
 And sought the sacred spot to mem'ry dear,
 Where fair Copalpa dwelt in days gone by.
 All silent stood the house ; no sound of life
 Within its dreary portals reached his ear ;
 Where flowers once in radiant beauty bloomed
 Now weeds alone of rankest growth were found ;
 Slow dying from the want of fost'ring hands,
 For life, the unkempt trees still struggled on ;
 Convolvuli with all entwining arms
 Had seized the wasting door that once had swung
 On friendly hinge, to greet each passer by,
 And blocked the way with walls of living green ;

The thatch was rent by age and beating storm,
And lonesome gloom, complete posession held.
With heavy, aching heart and eyes suffused
He sadly gazed upon that ruined home.
Sweet forms of life had once held carnival
Within those dismal halls, and love, and joy, and peace,
In years agone had blessed those crumbling walls.
O'er changes sad 'twas vain to longer grieve ;
Of all the past, sweet memories would live ;
The future, though unknown, was all he had ;
He forced the doors ; the walls but echoed back
His own impatient footfalls on the floor.
All desolate he found the Toltec's home.
With deep surprise, as one from dead returned
To linger lovingly amidst the scenes
Held dearest, sweetest, in this mundane life
The villagers, his well known face beheld.
No one could tell him where the seer had gone
Or speak of sweet Copalpa's hidden fate.
Out on the lake once more, he sped his bark,
When far from shore, he stayed his dipping blade
And slowly drifting o'er the smooth expanse
Resigned himself to fitful wind or tide.
The sunset with its brilliance passed away ;
With noiseless step the Night came softly down
Sprinkling the ebon sky with countless gems.
Still drifting gently on he dreamed or slept
While midnight stars gleamed o'er the dusky scene.
At last, with golden skies, the morning came
And found him stranded on the northern shore.

He slept no more; he sprang upon the land;
He marked the course thus given by the breath
Of airy heav'n, then guided by the breeze
He sought the wildwood haunts of northern hills.
With rapid pace, scarce knowing where he went
Or why he took th' untraveled wildwood path,
He onward pressed his journey, hoping chance
Or accident would solve the mystery
That darkly veiled the aged Toltec's fate.
As thus he wandered waking mem'ry threw
Before his eyes a vision of the past.
In hunter's costume wildly clad he saw
Again the Toltec and himself pursue
With cautious haste and arrows ready fixed
The ocelotl to his mountain den.
Once more with mem'ry's eye he seemed to see
Half veiled in white by falling cascade's spray
A cavern door wide opening into fairy halls
With smooth laid rocky floors, with snowy walls,
With crystal domes of opalescent spar
Where often they had found repose and rest
Or stored the spoils of many a mountain chase.
Something seemed to whisper in his ear
He may have fled the cruel, heartless world
And sought that cavern midst the wilderness
To breathe away in peaceful solitude
The last sad hours of his despondent life.
Among the hills that ancient cave he sought
Nor wandered long ere cascades foam revealed
The spot where hidden portals once received

With welcome rest, the wearied hunter's feet.
With anxious heart he gained the cavern door
And as he passed within, O strange surprise !
How sweet a vision met his eager gaze.
'Twas fair Copalpa and her Toltec sire
Whose forms, in firelight's crimson glow revealed,
Filled all his soul with more than earthly light.
The deep astonishment, the rapturous joy,
No pen can write, no human tongue can tell.
The heart bereaved of all that's dear on earth,
In doubt, suspense, and tearful agony,
When unexpectedly from grief relieved,
Its sweetest hopes restored, alone can feel
Such depths of joy, such happiness as theirs.
Copalpa long had thought her lover dead.
The very day the royal pages said
Tezcalican was doomed to sacrifice,
She sadly heard the war-god's fatal drum
Wide echo o'er Tezcuco's lake and vale
With slow and solemn stroke, the victim's knell.
How sweet the happy days now passed away.
All tears were dried and banished ev'ry sigh ;
The clouded brow grew bright and fair again,
And hoary age regained its waning strength.
The forest game supplied their present wants
And when afar the beauteous sunset threw
Its brilliant tints upon the wooded hills
Tezcalican returning from the chase
Found bounteous cheer and loving smiles.
Thus far away in wild secluded haunts

Beyond the sight and sound of angry strife
These worn and weary waifs of human life
A sweet and undisturbed repose enjoyed,
And oft when twilight shadows softly crept
With soothing spell adown the mountain slopes
Each gave the hist'ry of adventures past
And thus Tezcalican his story told :
“ When we were captured on Tezcuco's wave
They bore me o'er the flood, bound hand and foot
To Tenochtitlan's darkest prison cell.
With six unhappy victims like myself
Condemned to die a sacrificial death
Our royal keepers led us forth to bid
A last adieu to all the scenes of earth
And o'er Tezcuco's tides with rapid oars
And southern course, they hurried us along,
Yet ere we gained the templed shore of death
Where lofty teocallis walls are seen
High overlooking all the fairy vale,
The god of storms arose and smote the lake
With roaring winds and blinding rain and hail.
I slipped, unseen, the thongs that bound my hands
And plunged amidst the white and boiling foam
And safely reached at last the neighb'ring shore.
At Ajotzinco lay the Spanish host.
The followers of great Malinche I joined
And, like a warrior from Tlascala's hills
Disguised, I marched beneath the white man's flag
And with them entered Tenochtitlan's walls.
There quietly for days and weeks I dwelt

And saw the mighty changes and events
That to the center shook the Aztec pow'r.
Alas, what horrid woes, what scenes of blood,
Of death and ruin dire have I beheld.
Although in seeming friendship oft they met,
The Indian emperor and fierce Malinche,
Yet from the first, they were but deadly foes
And each one played dark games of perfidy.
At last the mask was rudely thrown aside.
Malinche was in the grand reception hall
Of Aztec royalty ; his faithful guards
With brave Tonatiuh, their chief, stood near.
Almost unguarded Montezuma sat
Upon his throne and friendly greetings gave.
With fierce upbraiding then Malinche began
Accusing him of secret murders done
By his command, of treach'rous plots arranged
Threat'ning the lives of all the Spanish host.
In vain he strove to plead his innocence ;
The sword was at his breast ; the iron shaft
His soul had pierced ; a pris'ner weak and dumb
He sadly left his grand magnificence
And neath the stranger's eye, with feeble hand
And loosening rein, ruled o'er the Aztec world.
A calm prevailed ; Malinche was far away ;
The Spaniards walked the streets or traveled safe
Through all the land, but direful woes were near
And signs of ominous portent were seen
Boding calamities and mournful ruin.
'Twas greedy avarice broke the quietude

And made the city red with ghastly slain
And stained the lake with many a bleeding corse.
A thousand of the city's noblest youth
Arrayed in garments wrought with costly care
Shining with gold and pearls and sapphires bright,
Upon Mexitli's greatest temple held
With joyous rites a sacred festival.
With armed men Tonatiuh came forth
And on that festive, helpless throng he fell
With slaughter indiscriminate nor ceased
The falchion's bloody work until expired
The last of all that gay and happy band.
And oh ! what grief and anger fiercely burned
Within each Aztec heart as horror struck
They gazed upon their murdered, pillaged dead,
Then like the rushing flames that leap and swell
Where prairies stretch their arid meadows far,
The smothered fires of hot revenge burst forth
With furious rage, and blood ! blood ! blood ! was hissed
Through gnashing teeth, and all the multitude
Cried war ! war ! war ! through all the crowded streets
And seized their arms to join the mortal fray.
Then louder grew the harsh discordant din
And dark tumultuous crowds like ocean waves
Surged through the streets and fell with dire assault
Upon the red tetzontli palaces
That sheltered in their ancient halls the men
All red and gory from the work of death.
The storm of battle rolled along its walls
And fiercely swept around its solid tow'rs ;

Sharp, flinted arrows hissing through the air
And missiles from a myriad brawny arms
All mingling with the sulphurous fire and smoke
Of arquebus and thunder belching throats
Of pondrous culverins, shook earth and sky,
And strewed the earthy with bleeding, dying men.
Upon the walls the angry Aztecs rushed.
The bolted gates they strove to batter down
Or scale the battlements, but only fell
Beneath the white man's blade or sank in death
Where fierce Tlascala's spears the breaches kept.
Death ruled the battle's dread, terrific hour
And many a spirit sought its kindred dead
Within the sunset's ever glowing clime.
Night came at last and closed the bloody scene.
The morning dawned ; the ghastly dead were gone ;
No wounded lay upon the stony streets ;
A death like silence o'er the city reigned ;
'Twas short ; again low distant murmurs told
That mighty hosts were marshalling in arms
To try the bloody fate of battles more.
On, on they come, and wilder and wilder grew
The rash assault of reckless, daring men.
It was a weary day of blood and death.
Again the darkness bade the tumult cease.
Thus day by day the cruel siege went on
Until Malinche with reinforcements came.
O'er narrow dikes and broad obstructed streets
He forced his way and joined the weary men
So long beleagured by the Aztec hosts.

New strength and energy for our defense
His presence gave. He strove to pacify
The fi'ry passions of the angry foe;
A show'r of arrows was the answer giv'n.
Upon the loftiest tow'r that reared on high
Its summit o'er his guarded citadel
Next Montezuma showed his well known face.
The clash of arms and battle's clangor ceased.
Within an outer court among allies
And brave Tlascalan warriors, armed I stood
And heard his clear toned voice in half command
And half entreaty strive to calm the storm
And soothe the boistrous elements to peace.
As oft you've seen the mountain hurricane
With wrathful shrieks, leap down from rocky heights
And roll the quiet deeps of Xaltocan
In wild tumultuous waves of boiling foam
E'en so at sight of him my soul was stirred
And frenzy seized upon my heated brain.
Sweet joys forever lost, hearts broken, crushed,
Sorrows and insults, dungeon's dreary cells,
And solemn vows thy fearful wrongs and mine
To right, nerved ev'ry muscle in my frame
And loudly whispered, 'let the tyrant die.'
The murmurs scarce suppressed now trebly swelled
And clamor dire soon drowned the speaker's voice.
Around his kingly head a shower fell
Of missiles from the angry crowd below.
My arrow too sped on its vengeful course.
He fell; whose arrow gave the wrathful blow

I cannot tell ; 'twas not a weapon gave
 The mortal pang, 'twas grief and shame that laid
 The royal Montezuma low in death.
 Over the ashes of their noble dead
 Awhile the Aztecs mourned and we had peace,
 But short the calm ; brave Cuit-la-hu-a wore
 His brother's crown imperial. War, war,
 The rallying cry was heard through all the land.
 Again with wilder rage and fiercer wrath
 The storm of battle rolls along the earth ;
 Fair Tenochtitlan's walls with terror quake
 And bright Tezcuco trembles neath the shock.
 His mounted cavaliers Malinche led forth
 And often swept the streets with flaming brand
 But all in vain, for ev'ry Aztec slain
 A hundred added foemen seemed to spring
 Full armed from earth. Though many thousands fell
 Still thousands more filled up the bleeding ranks.
 'A thousand lives for one and vict'ry comes
 At last,' is Cuitlahua's dauntless cry,
 'A mighty nation is our firm support,
 Theirs but their own strong arms and weak allies.
 Starvation soon shall do the work for us
 And rid our land of cruel bloody foes.'
 He spoke the truth, for worn and wearied long
 By battle's toil, by constant watchfulness
 And pinched by want, we saw our only choice
 Was ling'ring death within the palace walls
 Or flight beset with perils, dread, unknown.
 With many a charge Malinche had swept the streets

Of ev'ry foe and we had leveled down
Each barricade and bridged the deep canals
When orders came, as night's deep shadows fell,
To leave the city and its hostile throngs.
But ah ! the horrors of that dreadful night ;
What tongue can tell its woes, its strife, its death ;
All wedged and crowded on the narrow dike,
The dark and dang'rous waves on either side,
We hurried on ; one bridge was safely passed ;
Another bridgeless chasm before us lay.
Like fiends from some black, hidden shore broke loose
A myriad hostile boat came swarming on
And burdened far, Tezcoco's troubled deeps.
With frantic rage upon our lines they rushed
And filled the gloomy shades of sombre night
With all the direful sounds of bloody war.
Arrows and stones and spears fell thick around
From either side upon our crowded ranks.
Some moored their little boats and sprang ashore
And hand to hand in fierce encounter strove,
Or grasping each his foe in mad embrace
Rolled down the narrow, slipp'ry banks and sank
Within the turbid waters. Shrieks and groans,
Entreaties and commands, the horses tramp,
The splash of waves, the roar of Spanish guns,
Made dismal night resound with hideous din.
Attacked on ev'ry side, the drawbridge fast,
Within the darksome gulf before us plunged
The living stream of reckless, frightened men.
Some sank to rise no more, some struggled long

But only fell in cruel Aztec hands
 To die upon the altar's bloody stone.
 A fewer number reached the friendly shore.
 Still onward rolled that living struggling stream.
 With cannons, wrecks, arms, horses, men, the chasm
 Was bridged at last and o'er it safely fled
 The ling'ring remnants of our hapless host.
 Alas! the horrors of that sad, sad night;
 Its memory can never fade while sense
 And reason rule this thinking soul of mine.
 The morning found us on Tezcoco's shore
 From present danger free, but ah! how thin
 And weak our ranks; not half our army saved
 From out the jaws of that devouring night.
 For fair Tlascala's land of bread I saw
 Malinche lead forth his shattered, weakened band.
 Far eastward he hath gone but will return.
 O'er Tenochtitlan's prostrate walls shall float
 Triumphantly the Spaniard's conq'ring flag
 And Aztec pow'r shall fall to rise no more."
 He ceased and thus the Toltec seer began :
 " 'Tis well that cruel pow'r should fall to earth.
 Too long its superstitions dark and dense
 Have veiled this land from all the glorious light
 Kind heaven fain would pour in ceaseless floods
 Upon its ever fair and beauteous plains.
 Those ghastly pyramids of human skulls
 That fill the land, are mournful monuments
 Of false religion and perverted faith,
 Of bloody, idol worship, dismal rites,

Of priestly bigotry and sad misrule.
That cruel race must bow the suppliant knee ;
Its day is past ; the long, long, bitter night
Begins to cast its gloomy shadows round ;
Its cup is full of loathsome wickedness
And it must drain it to the very dregs ;
Its robes of golden woof and plumage fair
Are worn and soiled and soon forlorn and weak,
Naked and desolate, 'twill crouch and weep
Beneath the pit'less stranger's iron rule.
Commotions, wars, and pestilential plagues,
Earthquakes, and devastating floods, and storms,
And changes great, and full of dire dismay,
Shall come upon this land, but rest and peace
Shall dawn at last and heaven's glorious light
Resplendent o'er a world regenerate
Shall slowly brighten into perfect day."

JOHN AND I.

O what a merry set were we,
 When ruddy boys long years ago !
 How wild we romped in thoughtless glee,
 And how we loved the fleecy snow ;
 Our skates shone bright in rapid flight,
 Our limbs were strong and spirits light.

Ah ! John, we've had some gleesome times
 At th' old brown school house in the dell.
 I still recall the ringing chimes
 That echoed from the brazen bell ;
 E'en now each well rememb'red note
 Seems on the morning air to float.

'Twas there too John ! we chose our girls ;
 You one with eyes of azure light
 Who wore her golden hair in curls,
 I, one with hazel eyes as bright,
 With face to me so sweet and fair,
 They both are gone, I know not where

How changed is all the world since then.
 The passing years have whirled us on,
 And now we're tall and bearded men
 Struggling with fitful fortune, John ;
 And though the vict'ry seems afar
 Bright hope is still our guiding star.

How sadly now our band is broken ;
Far o'er the land they're scattered wide ;
The sculptured stone, affection's tok'n,
White gleaming on some green hill side
Tells where some well rememb'red face
Hath found a quiet sleeping place.

The war hath claimed its victims too ;
Poor Charlie's laughing eyes grew dim
While bravely clad in Union blue.
Dead ! dead ! he died mid battl's din,
Died where the old flag rose and fell,
Died where the cannon boomed his knell.

Bright Harry too, so sad his fate,
With lost Sultana's crew he died ;
Borne from the prison's open gate
To sink where ever rolls the tide
Of mighty Mississippi's waves
Over its dark unfathomed caves.

Yes John ! our band is broken now,
And many a silv'ry voice is hushed,
And grief hath saddened many a brow
And many a youthful hope is crushed,
And many an airy castle bright
Hath faded from our anxious sight.

A few years more, how short they seem !
When wrinkled, gray, and old, the last
Of our bright band shall sleep to dream
No more of joys and sorrows past,
But, with a sweet untroubled rest
Recline upon earth's loving breast.

And now dear John, we'll ever pray,
Whatever fortune may betide,
That in the future's glorious day
With radiant souls all purified
We'll meet once more, a joyful band
In happy realms of spirit land.

ETHERIAL FORMS.

Oh beauteous shapes that fill the air,
The forms of thought and action fair,
All forms of good that men have done
Since earth obeyed the smiling sun,
Come, breathe upon my languid heart
And aspirations pure impart.

Come, touch my soul with living fire,
And strengthen ev'ry good desire
That I might lift some drooping form
From darkness into sunlight warm,
Rescue some one from sinful chains
And show him where true freedom reigns.

SOMNUS.

When sunlight fades in Western skies
And Evening o'er our landscape flies
With widespread wings of sombre hue
Eclipsing all high heaven's blue,
I wait for thee with longings deep
Thou god benign of blessed sleep.

Whene'er thou see'st the crimson stains
The dying day leaves on the plains,
Then come to me, that I may rest
My languid head upon thy breast,
And gaze within thy drowsy eyes
And dream of blissful paradise.

When wearied with my daily toil
And senses reel with earth's turmoil,
When restless thoughts spare not the brain,
Or sorrow comes with rending pain,
Then come to me on gentle wing
And slumber from thy treasures bring.

When drooping spirits o'er me bend,
And weights upon my heart suspend,
And all the world seems hard and cold,
Then in thy sweet embrace enfold
Me till my willing soul floats on
Lethean waves of Acheron.

Oh, never more while life is mine
 Forsake the couch where I recline.
 When I would know no more of care,
 When I would wasting life repair,
 When I would roam in dreamland bowers,
 Then wreath my brow with restful flow'rs.

Ah, then how sweet will I repose
 Soothed by the gifts thy love bestows !
 Reclining in thy dear embrace
 No tears shall stain my radiant face,
 And when old age my strength has riv'n
 From out thy arms shall wake in heav'n.

ASK AND EMLA.

(ASH AND ELM.)

In ancient time when all the world was young,
 The Asas, from a race of giants sprung,
 The mighty Ymer slew and from his bones
 They built the mountains high with solid stones ;
 From out his flesh the level land was built ;
 The ocean surged where'er his blood was spilt ;
 To grass and trees that love the Summer air
 They changed the slaughtered Ymer's ruddy hair ;

His eyebrows circling round like ramparts high
Produced Midgard, a land of azure sky ;
The clouds dark swelling with abundant rains
And charged with lightning's fire, sprang fróm his brains;
While over all the land and sea thus made
The mighty giant's dome-like skull was laid.
Beyond the clouds with outlines dimly seen
Where mortal beings yet had never been
Lay Asgard's beauteous fields of pure delight
Where Asas dwell in homes of silver bright.
When Gladshiem here, with golden towers shone
Complete from dome to deep foundation stone,
Three Asas left their fair and happy lands
And wandered over Midgard's lonely strands.
The grass was fresh and green beneath their feet ;
The flowers filled the air with odors sweet ;
The zephyrs whispered in the leafy bow'rs ;
The birds, too, sang through all the summer hours ;
Abundant game was seen on ev'ry strand
And fruit hung ready for the willing hand ;
The limpid brook that bubbled through the vale
Was bright with fish, white-clad in silver mail ;
The sunny skies were radiant over-head ;
And ocean calmly slept within his bed,
But on this beauteous world, by Asas raised
For man, no human eye had ever gazed,
No human ear had caught the melody
That murmured sweetly over land and sea.
Along the sea shore o'er the gleaming sands
The Asas wandered on through many lands

Till growing side by side, at last they found
 An ash and elm, with verdant leaflets crowned.
 His hands on them the mighty Loder laid
 While bright the light of Heaven round him played ;
 To each he gave a beauteous human form
 And filled their veins with currents red and warm ;
 He gave them eyes and ears and passions fire
 And filled their throbbing hearts with deep desire,
 Then Odin, great all-father, blest the pair
 And softly breathed on them celestial air
 Endowing them with pow'rs of highest worth,
 A thinking mind, and soul of god-like birth.

SOMETIMES.

“Golden-haired child in the morn of thy being
 Nurtured in kindness, thy parents chief treasure,
 Will you be happier when you are older,
 Knowing the world with its pains and its pleasures ?”

“O ! I am longing for bliss more enchanting,
 When I can live in some glorious sun-clime
 Crowned with the chaplets of favoring fortune
 In the bright days of the coming sometime.”

“Pilgrim so weary of life’s heavy burdens
 What are the signs empyrean now gleaming ?
 See’st thou glimpses of a gladsome future
 Over thy toilsome pathway streaming ?”

“Yes, my companion in life’s rugged journey ;
 Bright are the stars in the heaven now shining
 Lighting the realms of the blessed hereafter,
 Realms that are free from all grief and repining.”

“Storm tossed sailor on life’s troubled ocean,
 Victim of sad disappointment and sorrow,
 Can’st thou see aught in the twilight of heaven
 Bidding thee hope for a golden tomorrow ?”

“Omens I see in the sky’s azure regions
 Faintly revealing the light of the dawning ;
 Speed thee, O ! speed thee, angel of brightness,
 Hasten the light of a joyful morning !”

“Soon shall the rays of thy golden wings shimmer
 Darkness and shadow shall melt in the sunshine,
 Then shall we read on banners celestial
 Happiness dwells in the sweet coming sometime.”

MEMORIAL DAY.

O, glorious land, Columbia's strand,
 How broad and rich thy fertile plains !
 How grandly rise to meet the skies
 Thy lofty peaks and mountain chains.

We love thy fields that cotton yields,
 Thy mountain streams that gleam with gold,
 Thy prairies green where corn is seen
 Thy rock-bound shores with headlands bold.

With swelling pride, we watch the tide
 The Mississippi rolls along ;
 With joy we view the lakes of blue
 Where merchant sails in beauty throng.

We chant in song, our numbers strong
 Our wealth and great prosperity,
 And well we may, such glorious day
 No other land may hope to see.

'Tis well to praise, in tuneful lays
 Our patriot sires from o'er the main
 Who laid in toil, 'mid war's turmoil
 Foundations deep for Freedom's fane.

Those noble names which now are fame's
 Who freed our land from servitude
 Who fought and won with Washington
 Shall ever claim our gratitude.

Long live in rhyme their deeds sublime ;
High let their names emblazoned be,
While men revere with love sincere
The cherished name of liberty.

But dearer yet, can we forget
Our soldier comrades, true and tried
Who bravely fell, while battling well,
And for our sacred Union died ?

When traitor hands in sunny lands
Against our cherished Union rose
They rushed to arms, mid war's alarms
And struggled with our country's foes.

With honor blest, they sank to rest
That Freedom's holy fane might stand
That truth and right o'er wrong and might
Should noble victory command.

Then flowers bring in blooming Spring
And weave them into garlands fair ;
We'll gently spread them o'er our dead,
Bright emblems of our loving care.

These fading flowers, the birth of showers
Renew each year of coming time,
Till loyal fires each heart inspires
To patriotic deeds sublime.

WIT BETTER THAN STRENGTH.

The sun was in the azure sky ;
 The morning breeze was on the wing ;
 The crystal streamlet bubbled by ;
 The fields were sweet with blooms of Spring ;
 And all the landscape fair and bright
 Lay smiling in the glad sunlight.

The air was filled with humming bees
 Wide searching through the flow'ry fields ;
 The birds were singing in the trees,
 And where the scented clover yields
 Its fragrance to the passing breeze
 Fed happy flocks in thoughtless ease.

I wandered far in musing mood
 Through meadows green and valleys fair
 Neath clinging vines and darksome wood,
 O'er rocky hills and fallows bare,
 Then sat me down where waters play
 In silver chimes the livelong day.

The tinkling, chirping, bubbling sounds
 Of bells and birds and cascades near
 White foaming through their rocky bounds
 Entrancing ev'ry listning ear
 Cast o'er my mind a magic spell
 And led me where enchanters dwell.

Where birds of song and birds of prey
From lowland plains and mountains bold,
And birds from ocean's briny spray,
From torrid lands and regions cold,
Were gathered round on airy wing
To choose the feathered tribes a king.

The bird that might with pinion bold
The highest blue of heav'n aspire,
And bathe his wings in sunlight's gold,
Exceeding all and mounting higher
Should be with worthy honors blest
The chosen king of all the rest.

I saw them spread their wings in flight
And whirl through heaven's cloudless blue
With eager cries of wild delight,
But o'er them all the eagle flew
And downward looked with haughty glow
Upon the failing wings below.

On, on, and higher still he whirled
Unconscious of the wren he bore
Perched on his back with pinions furled,
And when at last his flight was o'er
And down he stooped from lofty skies,
The wren shot high and won the prize.

And then I heard the thrushes sing:
"The wren is small, the wren is fair,
The wren hath but a tiny wing
Yet he hath wit and wisdom rare,
Loud let his worthy praises ring
For he shall be our loving king."

THE FIRE KING.

Aha! a Demon? Yes, a king.
Out, out, on ev'ry breeze I fling
My banner to the trembling world,
A blazing banner high unfurled,
A banner streaked with lightning's ire
And crimsoned o'er with angry fire.

Throughout the universe I reign
And bright revolving worlds sustain.
Around the sun my robes I fold
In glowing dress of yellow gold;
The stars that blaze in boundless space
Submissive yield to my embrace.

My pencil tints the beauteous sky;
I fling the lightnings from on high;
I warm the breeze that floats along;
I make the ocean currents strong;
The Spring strews flowers in my path
And Winter flies my burning wrath.

In central earth neath oceans deep
My glowing forge I ever keep;
I touch the mountains and they smoke
I rend the earth with earthquake stroke
And pour my molten lavas wide
In many a red and scorching tide,

I course through all the veins of life ;
And aid in ev'ry deadly strife.
The steam expands at my command
And toils for man on sea and land ;
I heat the forge, I turn the mill,
I bless or curse where'er I will.

In gentle mood with tender hand
I cheer with warmth the household band
Like toiling slave of servile birth
Throughout the busy realms of earth
To calm and peaceful work resigned
I toil and labor for mankind.

But when I'm roused with fierce desire
I burst all bounds in dreadful ire
While Ruin, Death, and pale Dismay
Like raging demons round me play
And on the wings of smoke and flame
Spread wide the terrors of my name.

Where'er my chariot wheels are whirled
With rumbling roar I stun the world.
The cow'ring nations stand aghast
Until my furious steeds have passed,
While earth and sea and sky are red
With pyres that light the mangled dead.

GROWING OLDER.

I'm a trav'ler, wand'ring trav'ler
 In this mystic world of motion,
 Scanning all its great mutations
 On the land and on the ocean,
 All its changes ending never
 Bringing joy or sorrow ever.

Ever in my lonely musings
 Whisp'ring voices seem to greet me,
 Voices from the sky surrounding,
 Voices from the earth beneath me,
 From the wat'ry flood and fountain
 And the cliffs that top the mountain.

Deep within the secret chambers,
 Chambers of my soul's indwelling,
 Temple of the inner being
 Tiny voices ever swelling,
 Seem to whisper, "Growing older,
 Slowly fading, growing older."

I behold my friends around me,
 Note their ever changing features
 As the ceaseless years roll onward,
 Showing that we're transient creatures,
 Showing that the earth is but the portal,
 Not the home of souls immortal.

I can see their wrinkles growing,
 See their beaming eyes grow dimmer,
 See their noble forms grow stooping,
 See thir fires of vigor glimmer,
 Fainter, weaker, slowly colder,
 Day by day they're growing older.

They are passing, swiftly passing
 To the land of spirit nations ;
 One by one they cross the river,
 Gloomy verge of fair creation,
 Leaving lifeless forms to slumber
 Where the tombstones earth encumber.

Look upon the fairest cities
 Glowing in resplendent riches,
 Gilded domes and marble temples,
 Pillared halls and statued niches,
 Vast cathedrals dim and solemn
 Grandly built with arch and column.

Age shall fiercely come upon them
 Crushing down and overturning,
 Leaving scarce a stone to tell you
 Where the seats of wealth and learning
 Once received the adoration
 Of some unrememb'red nation.

Ev'ry work of man's construction,
 Aqueducts and sparkling fountains,
 Moles, restraining dashing billows,
 Tunnels through the granite mountains,
 Ever tell the olden story
 Transient is each earthly glory.

Egypt's massive sculptures whisper
 To the trav'ler wand'ring thither,
 " Growing older, crumbling, falling,
 Thus all fame at last must wither,
 Thus all beauty, strength and glory
 Soon shall be but ruins hoary."

Neath the palm tree's grateful shadow
 Where the torrid sun is shining,
 Uxmal lifts its mould'ring towers
 Green with tangled vines entwining,
 Wasting midst the vegetation
 Into dreary desolation.

Mighty nations rise and prosper
 Filling all the world with wonder
 At their power, fame and glory,
 Yet how soon they break asunder,
 Scatt'ring fragments as the token
 Of their grandeur, crushed and broken.

Earth itself is growing older ;
 Rocky cliffs are downward bending,
 Worn away by wasting ages
 To the level plains descending,
 And the ocean ever beating
 Solid earth is ever eating.

Rivers with their mighty currents,
 Melting snows in mountain gorges
 Sweeping with their torrents seaward,
 Volcans, with their blazing forges,
 Earth remoulding and renewing
 Ever tell what Time is doing.

View the glorious orb of morning

Rising from its eastern bowers,
Shedding wide its golden sunshine

Over temples, domes and towers,
Wide dispersing gloom and sadness
Filling all the world with gladness.

When the cheerful day is wasting,

When the sunset tints are fading
From the dappled skies of evening,

When the darkness flings her shading
Over land and over ocean,
Watch the moon's majestic motion.

Gaze upon the star-lit heaven

Flashing with its silv'ry gleaming,
Mark the comet's blazing pathway

With its light through darkness streaming,
See the meteoric sparkling
Bursting through the heaven darkling.

Look on these celestial bodies;

Listen to the voices falling
From their high abodes in ether

Plainly to us ever calling,
Read their sad and solemn story,
Learn that all is transitory.

Yes! the sun, so grand and glorious,

Ev'ry shining constellation,
Ev'ry orb in heaven flying
Through the depths of vast creation
Shall bow down in mild submission
Bound by mighty Time's decision.

Dreams there were in olden ages,
 Dreams of youth's perpetual fountain,
 Life's elixir, health restorer,
 Hid beneath some western mountain ;
 Joyful was the drinker, ever
 Blest with fadeless youth forever.

Heroes vainly sought these waters
 Far exploring forests haunted,
 Wand'ring over pathless regions
 Full of hope, with hearts undaunted ;
 They but found a spot for dying
 Lonely graves neath forests sighing.

Yet the fount of youth unfading
 Is not all a mere delusion,
 Mocking all our aspirations,
 Mingling hopes in strange confusion,
 For, in heaven ever glowing
 You may find the fountain flowing.

He who drinks those crystal waters
 From the throne of God proceeding,
 Tastes the golden fruits of heaven
 Ev'ry hungry spirit feeding,
 Safe from age, in climes supernal
 Shall be blest with life eternal.

Time may roll unending cycles,
 Wing his flight forever soaring
 Blot out shining spheres from being,
 Back to Chaos worlds restoring,
 But he dares not heaven's portal
 Sacred home of souls immortal.

THE STILL SMALL VOICE.

Elijah stood upon the mount of God.
Above his head, the heavens blue and calm
No sign of storm or boist'rous wind displayed.
Far eastward, o'er the hills, the morning sun
Majestic rose, and all the world around,
With gladsome smiling, welcomed his ascent.
Around were rugged rocks and threat'ning crags
Bright gleaming in the golden light of day,
While far below, the trackless wilderness
With many an ancient grove of verdant trees
Beneath the shadow of the mountain, slept
In quiet solitude, a dreamless sleep.
With outstretched arms and eyes that anxious seemed
To pierce the airy veil that round him hung,
To heaven's king the kneeling prophet prayed ;
" Lord, God of Hosts ! most jealous have I been
For thee ; for Israel, with wicked hands,
Forsaking all thy covenants, have thrown
Thy altars down, and, with the sword, slain
Thy prophets. I, e'en I alone, remain
And now, through all the land, my life they seek."
Elijah rose and stood before the Lord
And for his coming waited silently.
A mighty wind arose and smote in wrath
The mountain's crest ; it clave the rocks in twain

And rent the strongest cedars, but the Lord
Came not in howling storm. An earthquake shook
The rock built mountains, but the Lord was not
In earthquake shock ; then red'ning all the sky
Came fire and Horeb blazed with lightning's glare.
The Lord came not in fire's consuming flame.
He came at last ; a still small voice it was,
And then the prophet knew the Lord had come,
And bowing down his veiled face, received
In meek humility his gentle words.
Long years have passed. No prophet stands to-day
Before the Lord on Horeb's holy mount
But now, as then, the still small voice is heard.
The Lord comes not in wild tumultuous din,
Nor takes the stony heart by fierce assault,
But softens and subdues by influence sweet
And leads by love divine the willing soul.
In hours of joy it speaks of gratitude ;
In grief and sorrow, consolation gives ;
On hearts despairing sheds the light of hope
And leads the wand'ring pilgrim home to God.

JOHN'S LETTER.

Within my happy home terrene,
The summer of my life serene,
Dear John ! beloved friend of yore !
Tho' far removed from mortal eyes,
Tho' dwelling in celestial skies
To thee I fain would write once more.

Beneath some cheerful shady wood
I often sit in musing mood
And think of thee, so long unseen,
While futile questions come and go
Like rippling waves that gently flow
Where brooklets lave their margins green.

Where are you now, I ask once more,
Dost haunt some fair enchanted shore,
Some mystic haven far away ?
Dost e'er revisit earthly climes
Once sacred held in olden times,
Or dost thou sleep in cold decay ?

Knowest thou aught what lives we lead,
Of thoughts we cherish in our creed,
Of hopes that beckon on with smiles,
Of toil and care that clogs the soul,
Of griefs that on our bosoms roll
Like surges over sea born isles ?

When death's grim shadow o'er thee fell
 And naught its darkness could dispel,
 And faith and hope and love were vain,
 Say, wast thou conscious how we grieved,
 And how our heavy hearts bereaved
 Were anguished long with bitter pain ?

And since the sad and weary day
 When we entombed thy mortal clay,
 Obedient to the will of fate,
 Hast thou e'er grieved and suffered pain,
 Or hast thou found that death was gain
 The birth of an elysian state ?

Hast thou on heavenly pinions borne
 Far toward the golden gates of morn
 Searched out the mysteries of life,
 Or farther still with bolder sweep
 Explored wide the starry deep
 And sought new worlds of strange delight ?

Hast thou yet learned what life may be
 Or what is fate and destiny ?
 Why Sin and Evil had a birth,
 Why Sorrow with despondent air
 Should curse mankind with black despair
 And Death should sway the realms of earth ?

Please come to me on angel wing
 And answer to this letter bring
 That I may know thy present state,
 For oh ! how deeply yearns my soul
 For one sweet word from heaven's goal
 To shadow forth our future state.

Within that strange mysterious clime
 Where blazing suns n'er mount sublime
 Nor radiant beam with sunny day,
 Within that world, so dark, unknown,
 Whose gates are kept by death alone
 For but a single glance I pray.

Come, lift the veil I now implore
 And let me look beyond the shore
 That hides thee in its silent gloom
 And see with eyes supremely blest
 Some glimpses of that heavenly rest
 Ere grim despair my hopes consume.

And now farewell! no more I'll write
 While doubts bedim my feeble sight.
 Though I should never greet thee more,
 Nor know what destinies are thine
 While earthly claims our thoughts confine,
 Yet, time may all our joys restore.

HEAVEN'S WELCOME.

How strangely now, dear John, we meet
 And with increased affection greet
 Each other on this mystic shore,
 This spirit land unknown and strange
 Where we with tireless limbs may range
 And Death may never part us more.

'Tis twenty years ago, long years,
 Dear John, since we with many tears
 Resigned thee sadly to thy God ;
 Folded thy hands in sweet repose
 Weary no more with earthly woes
 And laid thee neath the verdant sod.

The twigs we planted o'er thy tomb
 Now stately trees in radiant bloom
 Cast fragrant showers o'er the ground
 While midst the boughs that o'er it bend
 The birds and bees their music blend
 With many a sweet harmonious sound.

I need not tell how many more
 Our loved and cherished friends of yore
 Now rest within that hallowed ground ;
 Their souls entranced in blissful rest
 Have gained these regions of the blest
 And greeted thee with joy profound.

'Tis joy indeed to meet thee now,
 To see the light upon thy brow
 That tells of heav'n's ecstatic climes,
 To see once more thy loving face,
 And clasp thy form in sweet embrace,
 And talk with thee of olden times.

As thoughtful still as when on earth
 You meet me at my new life's birth
 When first in heav'n I ope my eyes,
 You guide my wand'ring steps aright,
 You lead me into purer light
 And feast my eyes with glad surprise.

And now I long to hear you tell
 How disembodied spirits dwell
 Within this sweet unfading clime.
 Do aspirations still inspire ?
 Do souls in heaven e'er desire
 To walk progressions heights sublime ?
 And more, I fain would hear, dear friend,
 How far these shining realms extend
 Beyond my vision's utmost bound,
 What spirits roam these happy plains,
 What fadeless joys this heav'n contains,
 And where God's dwelling place is found.

Shall we with angel eyes behold
 Our Father's throne more bright than gold
 Or ever see his form divine ?
 Shall we but gaze upon him here
 In glorious works that we revere,
 The wondrous proofs of his design ?

Ah, yes ! though we may never gaze
 Upon the infinite of days
 Or all his mighty realms explore ;
 Tho' we may never comprehend
 How far eternities extend
 Yet we may learn forever more. -

Where dwell those spirits fair I pray
 Whom once I knew in forms of clay,
 The loved and lost of days gone by ?
 For heaven's bright and glorious dome
 Can never be a perfect home
 Without their loving presence nigh.

'Tis well ! You say they all are here
 Awaiting me with words of cheer
 Ready to welcome me on high ;
 E'en now the bliss of paradise
 Falls o'er my form in golden guise
 And sunlight gleams from heaven's sky.

Yes, yes ! now o'er those crystal tow'rs
 O'ertopping all these heav'nly bow'rs
 Once more their radiant forms I see ;
 With outstretched hands and joyous eyes
 Illumined by empyrean skies
 They're bending now to welcome me.

O Death ! how long I feared thy pow'r
 And strove to shun the dreaded hour
 When I should feel thy heavy hand,
 But now in heaven's light I see
 How true a friend thou wast to me
 And bless thee for thy fatal brand.

Farewell, oh earth ! beloved sphere
 Sweet home of all my heart held dear
 When youthful hopes inspired my soul ;
 Farewell to all thy rich domains
 To all thy joys and all thy pains
 I've reached at last a heav'nly goal.

Hail, hail ! supernal glorious rest
 O bright abode ! supremely blest,
 My joyous home forever more.
 O forms of fair angelic mould
 Me, in thy loving arms enfold
 A welcome sweet, to heaven's shore.

THE DEATH OF BALDER.

In Asgard's bright and glorious land
 Where Odin rules with mighty hand,
 Unwelcome came the goddess Grief.
 With haggard brow and woeful face
 She sought the god's assembly place
 And stood before Valhal's great chief.

“O Goddess! never seen before
 Upon fair Gladshiem's golden shore,
 Bright home of all the noble slain,
 Why thus intrude in Odin's hall
 Or let thy gloomy shadow fall
 Within the Asa's glad domain ?”

“ 'Tis Balder's doom I come to tell.
 For Balder, gapes the gates of Hel,
 Harsh grating on their hinges wide;
 For Balder fair, and pure, and white,
 The radiant god of summer light,
 Must down through nine dark regions glide.

Fair Balder out of Gladshiem hurled
 Must ride through Helheim's gloomy world
 And grope through many a darksome vale,
 Must cross the Slid's envenomed wave,
 Pass by the Hel-hound's gnipacave
 And hear the howling monster wail.

For well I know that Balder's sleep
 Is filled with dreams that terror heap
 Upon his pure and god-like soul.
 These grievous dreams his fate foreshow
 And shadow forth the future woe
 That soon o'er Ida's plain shall roll.

High mounting Heimdal's bridge of flame
 From Midgard's lower realm I came
 To sing in rhymes the fate's decree
 But since my painful task is done,
 I'll leave awhile great Odin's son
 And visit Ran beneath the sea."

Then anxious, all the gods divine
 Who dwellings have in Asaheim
 And all the goddesses likewise
 For Balder's sake a council held
 That threatened woes might be dispelled,
 From Gladheim's ever sunny skies.

Then good it seemed to all the gods
 To send throughout the world's abodes
 Beseeching ev'ry being known,
 All things that in creation dwell,
 From Muspelheim to realms of Hel
 To bring no grief to Odin's throne.

All species then assurance gave,
 The cloud, the storm, the briny wave,
 Earths, and rocks, and metals bright,
 All things that in the waters play,
 That dwell on earth, in realms of day
 Or grope in regions dark as night.

Then all their vows and pledges giv'n,
 To injure not the light of heav'n
 And darkness bring o'er all the earth,
 Fair Frigg received and bore away
 To Gladsheim's realms of glorious day
 To cheer the gods of Asa birth.

Then up rose Odin fearing still
 Some cause o'erlooked forboding ill,
 And full on Sleipner's back he laid
 His golden saddle risted o'er
 With mystic runes of god-like lore
 And downward rode to Helheim's shade.

A dog he met from Helheim's shore
 Begrimed and stained with crimson gore
 Upon his breast and cruel jaws ;
 At Odin, lord of magic song,
 He gaped and barked with howlings long
 Or tore the earth with iron claws.

Still onward dauntless Odin rode
 Till gained was Hel's malign abode ;
 His course he stayed, the east gate reached,
 For well he knew that neath a mound
 The vala's grave could here be found,
 Where long in death her bones had bleached

Then looking north with deep intent
 Before the vala's grave he bent
 And chanted loud a magic song ;
 With runes and spells and potent charms
 He soon aroused from Death's cold arms
 The vala with prophetic tongue.

THE VALA.

Who cometh now so great and strong
 My rest to vex with mystic song ?
 The snow hath decked my lowly bed,
 The cruel rains have beaten me,
 The dews have moistened silently ;
 Uncounted years have I been dead.

VEGTAM.

Vegtam is now the name I bear
 And Valtam's noble blood I share.
 From earth I came, on thee to call.
 For whom are golden couches spread,
 Why precious rings their brilliance shed
 O'er benches bright in Helheim's hall ?

THE VALA.

For Balder doomed to Helheim's shade
 The well brewed mead is ready made
 And with a shield is covered o'er.
 Prophetic words will I declare ;
 The race of gods shall soon despair ;
 Now silent let me speak no more.

VEGTAM.

Nay Vala, be not silent yet
 Lest it may cause you deep regret
 And fill your soul with sad unrest.
 Whose hand shall strike the grievous blow
 Wide dark'ning all the world with woe
 And Balder send to shades unblest ?

THE VALA.

Blind Hoder, god of rayless night,
 His shining brother clad in light
 Shall hither hurl to Hel's domain.
 By strong compulsion have I spok'n
 Now let the magic spell be brok'n,
 That I may sleep in peace again.

VEGTAM.

For silence on this gloomy shore
 O Vala, plead with me no more ;
 My stay is short in Niffelheim ;
 One question yet; I must know all ;
 Who will avenge fair Balder's fall
 And Hoder punish for his crime ?

THE VALA.

In winter's halls of icy glare
 To Odin, Rind a son shall bear
 Who, ere his age shall count one day,
 Who, ere he wash, or comb, shall rise
 And Hoder hurl from darkened skies
 Now let me silent sleep, I pray.

Then back to heaven Odin rode
 To seek Valhal's divine abode
 And mingle with the Asas bright.
 To none advice he gave or sought
 Nor ever told what he had brought
 From Helheim's gloomy realms of night.

The Asas in their sun-gilt home
 Where Valhal gleams with silver dome
 Disturbed by Balder's dreams no more
 Since ev'ry creature vows had giv'n
 To injure not the light of heav'n
 Kept festal games on Asgard's shore.

When jealous Loke, the god of fire,
 Beheld pure Balder and his sire
 Rejoicing in the light of heav'n
 Dispensing gladness ev'rywhere
 With tender love and thoughtful care
 His breast with burning ire was riv'n.

In womanly disguise arrayed
 The Fensal palace he assayed
 And there the fatal secret learned ;
 The mistletoe of feeble growth
 Unfettered by the sacred oath
 For Balder's life was not concerned.

Rejecting all disguise he sought
 The mistletoe with mischief fraught
 Then from the shrub a branch he bore.
 Returning through the Asa lands,
 The deadly fragment in his hands,
 He gained Valhal's effulgent door.

Believing now that Balder's light
 Would ever bless the Asa's sight
 Upon his scathless form, a shining mark
 They hurled their arms in god-like sport
 Nor ever fear the gods resort
 Can lose its glory or grow dark.

Loke found the gods in bright array
 Engaging thus in harmless fray
 While sightless Hoder stood aside.
 Thus Loke : "O Hoder, god of night !
 Why standest thou withdrawn from light
 Nor weapon hurl at Odin's pride ?"

HODER.

I cannot see the shining mark
 Since all the world to me is dark
 And gloom o'ercasts my burdened mind ;
 I hear the spacious courts around
 With arms and joyous sports resound
 But not for me, for I am blind.

LOKE.

Here take this harmless parasite
 While I direct thy arm aright
 And Balder honor by a blow ;
 Though dim and sightless are thine eyes
 Thou canst this Asa world surprise
 And thus thy mighty power show.

Against the dazzling god of day
 Blind Hoder hurled the deadly spray
 And smote him with a fatal blow ;
 Predestined to the realms of Hel
 Bereft of life fair Balder fell
 And left the world in speechless woe.

With horror stricken eyes amazed,
With unexpected sorrow dazed,
The gods beheld fair Balder fall.
No power divine, however great
Could Balder save from destined fate
Or back from Death his soul recall.

Far southward shorn of golden beams,
Where red the angry fire-world gleams,
The sun went down mid lurid skies,
While from the realms of Angerbode
The cloud enveloped storm-fiends rode
And filled the world with tears and sighs.

Thus Balder's death in ancient time
Recorded in poetic rhyme,
Speaks sadly of the dying year.
The sun forsakes the northern skies.
The sullen clouds of winter rise
And darkly sweep in wild career.

A cry is heard, a sound breaks forth
Through all the regions of the north
Resounding far through realms of night:
All life in sea and earth and sky
With plaintive voice and weeping eye
Is heard to pray for blessed light.

RELICS.

Come John ! and look my relics o'er
The fragments of the life that's gone,
Mementoes cherished more and more
As swift the wheels of time roll on,
And let us live past hours again
Tho' some were fraught with grief and pain.

Within this trunk so black and old
You scarce would give it storage room,
I've hoarded treasures rich as gold
And fragrant with the sweet perfume
Of many a glorious halcyon day
That beamed athwart my youthful way.

Here is a worn-out pocket-book,
My father's present long ago ;
My notes and coin it gladly took
And served me honestly, I know,
So now it rests with honors rife
Reminder of my boyhood life.

These letters, too, now soiled and old
And faded by the breath of time,
Within their written pages hold
Sweet memories and thoughts sublime
That stir the heart and fire the brain
With youthful love and hope again.

This missive is a valentine

Penned by some gentle hand, perchance,
To touch my heart with fire divine

And fill my soul with love's romance,
And tho' unknown the author's name,
These lines I've saved from wasting flame.

A motto, John ! a heart and hand ;

Around it cling sweet memories
Of one who dwells in Beulah-land ;

Upon her grave neath willow trees
The rains have shed their crystal tears
And flowers bloomed for many years.

A silver lock of hair is here

Reminder of a loved one gone
Whose memory is ever dear ;

Whose life like summer morning's dawn
Bright shining o'er th' awak'ning earth,
Filled many a heart with joy and mirth.

Behold ! I pray, this golden star

Upon a ground of azure hue,
I brought it from the fields of war
Where it had beamed o'er ranks of blue
Till torn away by bursting shell
Down from its silken field it fell.

This crimson sash I used to wear

When bugle sounded dress parade ;
This sword, too, its honors share
For sure it was a trusty blade;
Companion near, by night, by day
Wherever duty led the way.

This photo of a manly form,

My comrade in a fierce campaign,
Fell by my side in battle's storm

While death was raging o'er the plain
And gave his strong and hopeful life
A victim to Rebellion's strife.

Another here who sank to rest

Not hurled to death by shot or shell
But weak and faint, with want oppressed
Died in a Southern prison hell
Where loving hands might n'er compose
His pallid form in death's repose.

And here is one with eyes of blue

That ever shone with joyous light
Whose heart was warm, whose love was true,
Whose beauty made the world more bright,
But never more with sweet refrain
Shall her dear voice be heard again.

These shadow forms no voice may bring,

No hand with loving clasp extend
Yet still they come on mem'ry's wing
As silent as the dews descend,
And backward lead us thro' the years
Now fled with all their joys and tears.

GAMBRINUS.

Pluto sat among his minions
 Shaking from his bat-like pinions
 Sulph'rous odors clinging there,
 Then he hung his head in sadness,
 Showing signs of burning madness
 As he groaned in deep despair.

Soon erect he stood, and higher
 Than the flames of hell aspire
 Up he raised his mighty hand,
 Waved away the billows burning
 Red tides from his palace turning
 Then addressed his chosen band.

“ Hark, ye servants of the Devil,
 Chosen ministers of evil !
 Faithful have ye ever been
 In my labors truly aiding
 Earth forever boldly raiding
 Teaching men to live in sin.

Sorrow now has fallen round us,
 Dark despair hath stronger bound us,
 Sharper gnaws each stinging pain ;
 Hades, known in olden story,
 Now is losing ancient glory,
 Labors for it seem in vain.

Fewer, fewer souls are falling
 Hither drawn by Hades calling
 Urging them to choose our land;
 Much I fear we're losing power
 Day by day and hour by hour
 On the sunlight's glowing strand.

On the highway strait and narrow
 Cheered by hope and free from sorrow,
 Pilgrims throng toward heaven bright,
 While our road so broad and pleasant
 Well prepared for king or peasant
 Almost vacant pains my sight.

Many gins and snares I've planted,
 Sylvan groves with spirits haunted,
 Temples built to Venus fair,
 Bacchanalian altars founded,
 Trumps of fame and glory sounded,
 Tempting men our realms to share.

Now, companions of my choosing,
 Speak! what plan will stop our losing
 And our wonted power gain?
 Joy to us consists in doing,
 Leading men to hopeless ruin,
 Crowning them with endless pain."

Each one then of Pluto's minions
 Volunteered his fell opinions
 How to fill the realms below,
 How to drag to Hell's dark regions
 Human souls in countless legions
 Doomed to all consuming woe.

Avarice, Murder, Lust, and Anger,
 Rose with haste and noisy clangor ;
 Alcohol and Nicotine
 Lifted up their loathsome features ;
 War and other hateful creatures
 Crowding round their king were seen.

Many plans were then invented
 And with cunning speech presented
 To the crafty King of Hell ;
 In proposing what was needed
 Appetite alone succeeded
 In a plan that promised well.

Pluto heard his plan with gladness
 Caring naught for all the sadness
 It would bring upon the world.
 Out from Hades swiftly flying
 Came to where the Rhine was sighing
 Then his dusky pinions furled.

Soon a son he sired, Gambrinus,
 Who became as fond of wine as
 Bacchus, born of race divine.
 By his cunning father nourished
 Young Gambrinus grandly flourished
 In his castle on the Rhine.

'Twas a cold and bleak October
 When the fields were sad and sober
 Mid the valleys of the Rhine ;
 All the vintage had been wasted
 By the summer frosts that tasted
 Of the yet unripened wine.

When Gambrinus saw the ruin
 Caused by Frost's untimely wooing
 Urged by sateless appetite,
 Craving e'er and n'er contented,
 He the foamy beer invented
 Brewed from barley clean and white.

Knowing not his baneful dower
 Was the gift of Pluto's power
 Only planned for human woes,
 Soon the people gathered round him
 And with honors, King they crowned him,
 King of Heaven's untiring foes.

Then his image, crowned and burnished
 With a foaming goblet furnished
 Emblem of his godless reign,
 Could be seen in public highways,
 Gardens, groves, and secret byways,
 Where his worship cursed the plain.

Then did sorrow, crime, and anguish,
 Many a noble spirit vanquish,
 Many a happy home destroy ;
 Love of God was growing colder,
 Evil doers, waxing bolder,
 Reveled oft in maudlin joy.

Now, Gambrinus rules the nations
 Thro' the power of his potations
 While his father Pluto winking
 Smiles to see unnumbered millions
 Thronging to his dark pavilions
 Downward led by love of drinking.

THE VOICES OF THE WIND.

I hear the winds go sighing by,
I feel their touch upon my cheek,
I see them whirl the clouds on high
O'er lowland plain and mountain peak.

With dance and song they bound along
Like smiling maidens young and fair,
Or rush on noisy pinions strong
Like eagles thro' the ambient air.

They kiss the sleeping infant's lip,
Or bear away the mourner's sigh ;
They waft along the gallant ship,
Or play with sands on deserts dry.

Howe'er they come, howe'er they go,
In boistrous mood or gentle mien,
With angry shriek or whisper low,
They stories tell of what they've seen.

And oh, while sweeping round the earth,
What scenes of love, or hopeless pain,
Of tearful grief, or noisy mirth,
The winds have seen on land and main.

When over happy plains they fly,
Or rustle thro' the fragrant trees
They seem to sing of a brighter sky,
Of happy hearts and careless ease.

Again, when o'er the azure deep
They spread the rain clouds dark and dun
Until the misty heavens weep,
They chant a song of harvests won.

When southing thro' the lonely pines,
Or sighing over dreary plains
Where dim the sunlight shines,
My soul in sadness then complains.

They seem to tell of fading flow'rs,
Of autumn's sear and falling leaves,
And of those melancholy hours
When dying Nature gently grieves.

When dull and slow they murmur on
Like dirges from some distant shore,
I think of faces pale and wan
Whom I shall here behold no more.

But when they come with angry sweep
High tossing storm clouds thro' the sky,
They tell how sea born surges leap
Where ship-wrecked sailors sink and die.

'Tis then their wrathful howlings fill
The air with dread portentous wails,
And stoutest hearts grow faint and chill,
And all their boasted courage fails.

Perchance they come to tell of mirth
When tinkling bells and bounding sleighs
Go skimming o'er the snow white earth
Among the merry Christmas days.

Sometimes, on zephyr's gentle wing,
 With fragrant breath from flow'ry plains
 They sing of verdant, sunny spring,
 And echo far the thrushes' strains.
 'Tis then they speak in joyous rhyme
 Of new born life on ev'ry shore,
 And of some glorious coming time
 When death and storm shall fright no more.

THE BROOKLET,

Flowing soft with gentle murmur,
 Gliding thro' some shady nooklet,
 Sometimes dashing midst the boulders,
 I'm a sparkling, happy brooklet
 Blest with pure, unfailing fountains
 Nurtured midst the purple mountains.

Winding thro' the pleasant valley,
 Full of life, and rich in beauty,
 Laughing in the golden sunshine,
 Joyful I perform my duty
 Whether summer showers thrill me
 Or congealing winters chill me.

Would you know the good I'm doing,
Ask the flowers that bless my coming,
Ask the birds that sing above me,
Ask the bees around me humming,
Ask the cattle when they seek me
And the children when they greet me.

Like a song that soothes the mourner,
Like a hand that helps the weary,
Like the light that guides the erring,
Like the love that makes one cheery,
So my waves with fond caressing
Show my life is spent in blessing.

THE ANGEL'S SONG.

O fleecy cloud that floats on high
Across the arching, azure sky
Come down to me on airy wing,
And tell me what the angels sing !
Sing they of happy, cloudless skies
Found in some distant paradise
Where spirits free from earth-born clay
Bask in the light of endless day ?

Sing they of Truth that never dies,
 Of Beauty tinting all the skies,
 Of Patience meek, enduring long,
 And Hope that ever groweth strong ?

Sing they of Mercy, pure, divine
 That rules in heaven with sway benign,
 Or sing they more of Justice true
 That gives to ev'ry soul his due ?

Sing they of Pow'r omnipotent
 That never fails, whose force unspent
 Still fills unmeasured space afar
 With world on world and star on star ?

Ah ! now I hear the word you bring
 That tells me what the angels sing :
 They sing of Love and nothing more
 For Love is king on ev'ry shore.

THE SEARCH FOR GOD.

His voice, methinks, I sometimes hear,
 I tremble then with love and fear ;
 His footsteps with a muffled tread
 I seem to catch with solemn dread.

'Tis then I raise my sleeping soul
Like runner striving for the goal,
And forth I rush to seek His face,
Or grasp His form in love's embrace.

With bated breath I forward bound,
With hurried steps I spurn the ground,
But dark and darker still the clouds
Enwrap my soul in sable shrouds.

I listen for His footfall's sound
But only silence, deep, profound ;
Then back with careful pace I go
To search through all the realms below.

Upon the right I seek Him far
But gloomy doubts my vision bar,
Upon the left my search is vain,
My heart grows sick with longing pain.

His work I see, above, below,
On every side, where'er I go,
His love revealed in nature's laws,
His wisdom in effect and cause.

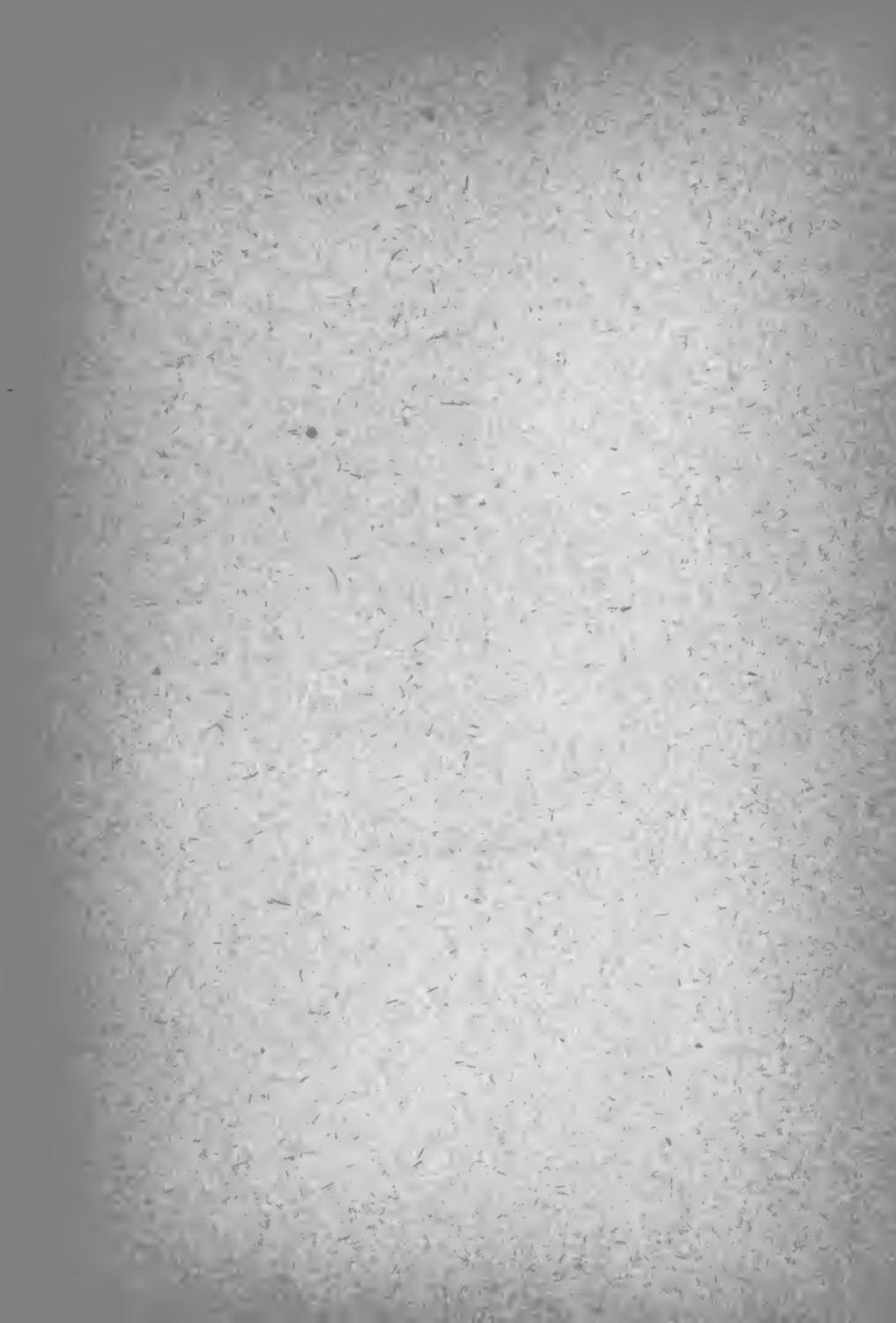
I cannot see His smiling face,
His holy form I cannot trace,
I cannot grasp His hand divine,
Or lean upon His breast benign.

And yet, I know I'm in His care,
I feel His presence everywhere ;
His love shall wipe each tear away,
And fill my heart with endless day.

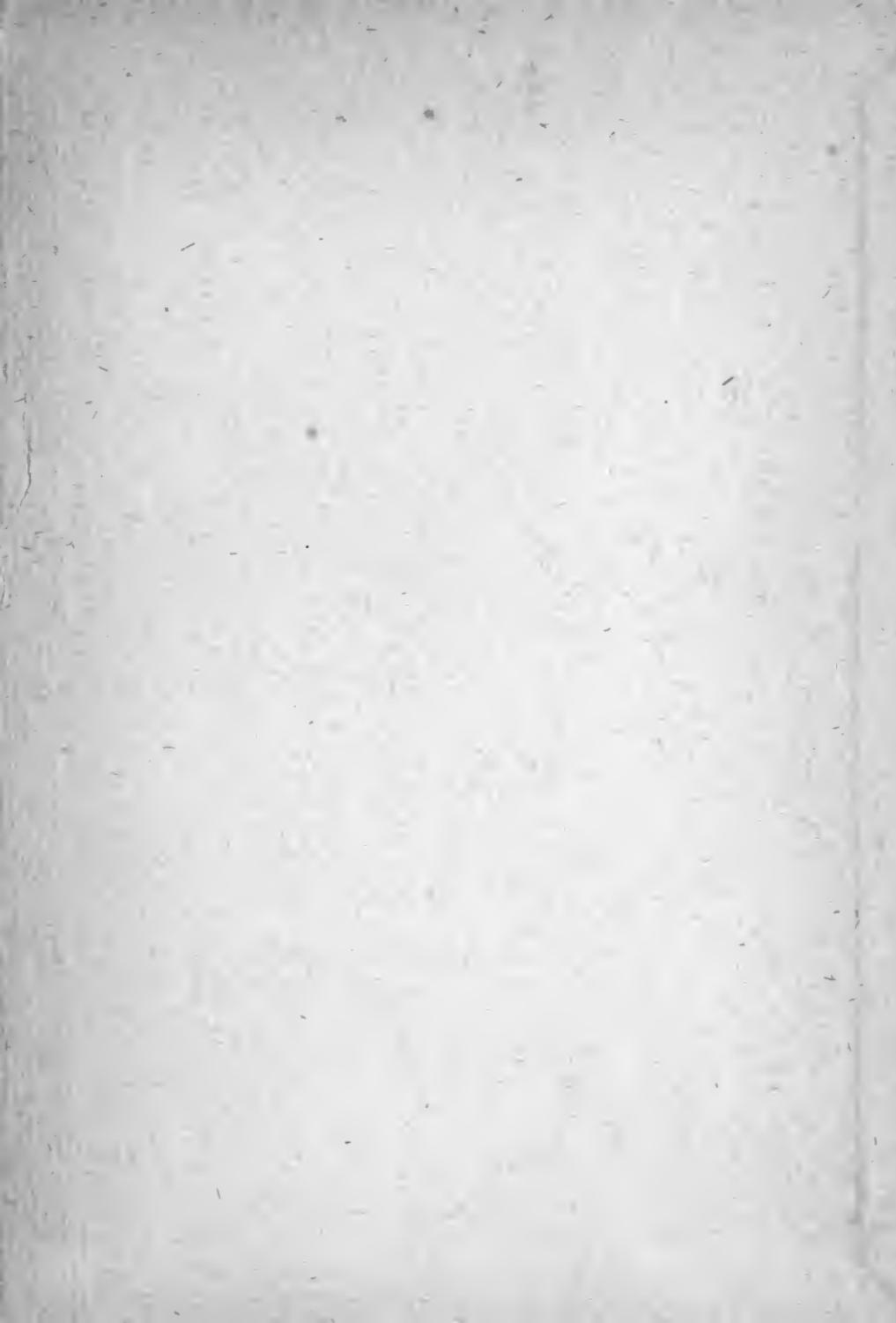
A NORSEMAN'S DEATH.

Come hither round my couch, my loving friends !
Behold me ! Am I dying ? Is my soul
So long possessor of this house of life
About to open wide its closeless door
And pass its threshold to return no more ?
Is it about to say the last farewell
To ev'ry earthly thing the heart holds dear
And seek a fairer home in Asa land ?
Is this the end a Viking chief should choose,
A man who nothing feared except to sin ?
Oh ! would that on the bloody field of death,
Beneath the shadow of Valkyrie's wing,
Contending bravely with heroic men
Amidst the din of loud resounding war,
My deathless soul had sought on wings sublime
The beauteous dwelling place where Odin reigns.
Think ye dear friends, my fatal hour has come ?
Must love be anguished by our partings sad,
And must I travel thro' that mystic gate
That opens into worlds unknown and strange ?
Ah, yes ! Your tearful faces answer me ;
Then bear me forth beyond these palace walls
That I may see the glorious sun once more.
I want to die beneath the open sky
Where I can hear the happy robins sing.

I want to see, once more, in distance dim
The misty clouds upon the mountain tops,
Once more behold the forests dark and old
That I have known since childhood's merry morn.
Oh ! let my eyes grow dim while looking out
Upon the world so beautiful and grand
A symbol of its great Creator's love,
And let the thoughts that last, with ling'ring steps,
March thro' the portals of my dark'ning brain,
With loving trust look up to God supreme.







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